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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

ITALY is all agog with excitement over the victory on the northern front in Abyssinia. There is nothing to suggest that this victory is in any sense decisive, or that it has demoralised the Ethiopian forces. The losses, on both sides, have no doubt been heavy; though we take the Italian claim to have killed 5,000 and wounded at least 10,000 of the barbarians with a large pinch of salt. But one thing is surely clear. This speeding-up of slaughter and frightfulness, with its natural encouragement to the aggressor, should stimulate the League to more strenuous efforts. The imposition of the oil embargo becomes more and not less urgent. Meanwhile, the Italians have got hold of and published to the world a secret interdepartmental report on British policy in East Africa, which throws an ugly light on our attitude to Mussolini's aggression. This document shows that last June Whitehall regarded an Italian conquest of Abyssinia with cynical complacency. But it does not show that the British people took that view; and the British people have, indeed, openly and emphatically repudiated it. And even Mr. Baldwin's Government, though its policy continues to be profoundly suspect, has learned some lessons in the last few months. It may plead, of course, that it never was committed to the shameless policy contemplated by its officials. But what is important is that it should show that there is no thought of a dirty deal in its mind now.

Mr. Baldwin and His Friend

In his capacity of Keeper of the Tory Party's Conscience, Sir Austen Chamberlain made a surprising attack on the Premier last Friday. In times of peace Mr. Baldwin's easy going inertia, his talent for letting well alone, may make him the ideal leader of the owning class, but when it senses the danger of war it may ask for a chief capable of prompt decision and energetic action. The two " blunders " on which Sir Austen dwelt were of very different degrees of culpability. Mr. Baldwin's support of the Hoare-Laval scheme was inexcusable. But when he underestimated the pace of Hitler's rearmament in the air he was merely repeating an error of his expert advisers, and they in their turn relied on French estimates, which for once minimised German military activity. The House, after listening to Sir Austen and Mr. Attlee, seemed to be agreed on the compromise solution of the case for a single Ministry of Defence. The proposal is that a Minister without portfolio, having under him a competent staff of experts from all three services, shall " co-ordinate " the plans and estimates of Navy, Army and Air Force. He would also replace the Prime Minister as Chairman

of the Imperial Defence Committee, and the attack on Mr. Baldwin is probably to be explained as a method of weakening his resistance to the proposal that Mr. Churchill should hold this post. A weak man in this position would merely arbitrate on differences brought before him. A strong man would inevitably impose on all three services an organic plan of defence, which implies giving some definite direction to British foreign policy.

Tennessee Valley

Rejoicing in Tennessee Valley and a panic slump in Wall Street—so did the "forgotten men" and the "money-changers" respond to the unexpected verdict of the Supreme Court. For the second time (the first was on the gold clause in contracts) the Court has disappointed property by sustaining some aspect of the New Deal. In this instance the immediate effect of its judgment is to declare constitutional the sale of electric current beyond the borders of a State by a Federally owned plant. Actually the judgment goes much farther and by inference, at least, legalises all the manifold activities of the Tennessee Valley Authority. This is, first of all, a signal and salutary defeat for the public utilities group, the most formidable and the most corrupt of the predatory interests opposed to the New Deal. It sought to stop the competition of a publicly owned plant with private enterprise, but chiefly it dreaded the use of this cheap power as a "yardstick" that may control the price of current. But much more than this was at stake. The Valley scheme is the boldest example of planning to be found outside Russia. Where reckless exploitation of the soil was making a desert and reducing the rural population to abysmal poverty, it aims, by re-afforestation and the restoration of permanent pasture, at stopping soil erosion and the silting up of the rivers. More than this, the impoverished small holders are being re-settled in colonies, partly agricultural, partly industrial, while full use is made at last of the water power of Muscle Shoals to produce fertilisers as well as current. After this victory the many smaller schemes based on this model in other parts of the States may now go forward.

Spain Goes Left Again

The Spanish elections have been held, and the victory of the Left celebrated, with some rioting and fighting and damage. But the disturbance, so far at least, has been no more than could have been expected in the excited state of public feeling. The victory is a surprising one; the full returns are not available as we write, but it seems clear that the "Popular Front" will have a clear working majority. It owes its success largely to the weakness and disunity of its opponents; the series of Governments that have held office during the past two years, composed of timid Radicals, Monarchists, Clericals, and quasi-Fascists, have done nothing effective. Opposition to them has been strengthened by determination to defend the Republican Constitution and to release the army of political prisoners who have been languishing in gaol up and down the country. Nobody can yet predict the future with any confidence. There seems little danger of a "Red Terror"; trouble from the defeated forces of the Right is more likely—there have already been abortive movements of revolt among the Army officers. On Wednesday the Cabinet resigned, and Señor Azaña, leader of the "Republican Left" and former Prime Minister, formed a new Government of a moderate complexion. He will presumably pursue a moderate policy—which, however, will have to include big, if not revolutionary reforms. But the cohesion of the revivified Left parties has yet to be tested, and they will, in any case, be confronted by a formidable opposition. Señor Gil Robles has announced his intention of taking a holiday, but his party will be the largest in the new Cortes.

The Assault on Léon Blum

The savage assault on Léon Blum by a crowd of Royalist thugs, who dragged him out of his car and would have battered him to death but for the timely intervention of a handful of courageous workmen, will not be soon forgotten in France. It caused a shock to everybody and created deep resentment on the Left. The shock was all the greater as it came as a complete surprise. For several weeks past the Right, and particularly the Croix de Feu, had been *sage* and very careful not to raise any Fascist "scares" just before the General Election. It seemed that the country had calmed down. But alas! the Royalists who seemed of little importance (had they not lost thousands of the "nicer" members to the Croix de Feu, and was not the *Action Française* almost on the point of closing down for lack of financial support?) suddenly showed the world that there was still some bite in the old dog. Their attempt to batter to death an old man of 64 was a good example of what they could do. M. Sarraut, who made the most impressive speech of his career at the Chamber that afternoon, branded the Royalists as "public criminals" and promised to strike at "the centres where these crimes are hatched and premeditated." With his systematic incitement to murder Charles Maurras is undoubtedly morally responsible for the assault on Blum, just as he was morally responsible, in 1914, for the assassination of Jaurès. It is all very well to give the devil his due, and to admire the vigorous journalism of MM. Daudet and Maurras; but France seems at last to have recognised that these men are professional trouble makers, and that there must be a limit to incitement to murder. A decree has been published dissolving the Royalist Leagues (who, without being large, are sufficiently dangerous for all that), and legal action has been taken against M. Maurras. The Left are also demanding the dissolution of the other Leagues.

The Front Populaire

The protest demonstration of the Front Populaire on Sunday was on a vast and impressive scale. 200,000 people took part in it, with 300,000 more cheering the procession as it marched in perfect order from the Panthéon (and past the Faculty of Law, that hotbed of Fascist and Royalist agitation) to the Place de la Nation, where the Front Commun was born on February 12th, 1934. The Right, including Colonel de la Rocque in person, have protested rather plaintively against the Government's "complicity with the revolutionaries" in allowing the demonstration. They are greatly perturbed by the attack on M. Blum; for it is only too likely to do the Left a world of good in the General Election; and their attempts to dismiss it as "a deplorable but insignificant incident" carry no conviction. It is true that M. Kerillis, the chief election agent of the Right, is now trying to raise a scare

on the strength of the Front Populaire procession which, he says, deeply impressed him. "It is more than we, people of the Right, could have done. It is high time we pulled ourselves together." But it is no use. More even than the Left, the Right must feel like kicking the *Action Française*. The attack on Blum was precisely the sort of incident that La Rocque wanted to avoid.

The Loan to France

The loan of forty million pounds by the London private bankers to the French Government is to be taken principally as reflecting the relative cheapness of short-term money in the London market. The French Government could not have borrowed money on anything like such easy terms in Paris, whereas London financiers were ready enough to take advantage of an almost riskless 3 per cent. investment for their almost unusable liquid funds. This difference between the price of money in London and Paris reflects, not differences in the opportunities for its profitable use, but rather differences in the estimation of political risks. The French financiers fear they know not quite what; but their fears are expressed in a doubtfulness about the Government's credit. On the other hand, in England no one seems seriously to fear a French political crisis in the near future of such a character as to affect the French Government's ability to meet its debts. London, therefore, is prepared to lend; whereas Paris, judging by itself rather than by all France, sets a low rating on the Government's credit. London thus helps politically as well as economically to stabilise France for the time being, though it remains as doubtful as ever whether the present gold valuation of the franc can be or should be permanently maintained.

The Natives in South Africa

The Native Representation Bill, debated at the joint session of the Houses of the South African Parliament, marks the culmination of a series of attacks on the status of the native carried out in recent years. Various measures restricting his right to enter skilled occupations or to own land have all been passed with the purpose of ensuring his economic subjection. The new law is a parallel attack on the scanty political privileges possessed by the natives in the Cape Province. It provides that voters under the existing Cape Native Franchise shall be transferred to a special register with the power to return three European members to the House of Assembly and two to the Cape Provincial Assembly. This means in effect a permanent limitation on the number of native representatives; a two-thirds majority in both Houses will be necessary in order to secure any alteration in the law. The pill is generously sugared by an accompanying proposal to set up a Native Representative Council possessing advisory powers; but experience has cultivated among the natives a healthy suspicion of General Hertzog's gifts. And if anyone doubts the Bill's implications, Sir Abe Bailey has made them quite clear in a letter to the press. "The strength and simplicity" of the measure, he claims, bears "the stamp of genius," as it deals with "the immediate pressing need of stemming the tide of native domination." The purpose which the Bill embodies is native segregation, combined with political and economic subjugation, a policy which if carried rigorously into effect is likely sooner or later to lead to violent upheaval.

The Spinning Bill—What Then?

An attempt to insert provision for a second ballot of the cotton spinners into the Spindles Bill was defeated in Parliament this week, despite the united support of the Labour Party and of the capitalist opponents of the Bill. The attempt was in fact a wrecking amendment; it is most improbable that the proposed three-quarters majority in favour of the Bill could be secured. The debate, however, did suffice to draw from Mr. Runciman a declaration that, if the Bill became law, he was prepared to consider similar measures for the weaving and other subsequent stages of the cotton industry. Such further legislation, indeed, alone can afford any justification for the present Bill; if the price of yarn is raised without anything being done to clear up the confusion in the weaving and finishing sections of the industry, its last state is likely to be worse than its first. In the very special conditions of the market for cotton goods, there is a case for measures designed to eliminate surplus capacity; but there is assuredly no case for a measure which will raise the price of yarn to the weavers without in any way improving their own opportunities for marketing their products.

The Back-Benchers

Why should a member of the House of Commons be precluded from serving on the new Sugar Commission, whereas a member of the House of Lords is not? Because, say the defenders of the proposed exclusion, the House of Commons, and not the House of Lords, is the controller of the public purse. The Labour Party in the debate on the Beet Sugar Bill sought to extend the prohibition to peers; but should they not rather have sought to remove it from members of the House of Commons? For as the sphere of public control is extended, and the monopoly of parliamentary time by the Government becomes more complete, the private member of the House of Commons runs an increasing danger of being crushed out between the two. If we mean the sphere of government, and government-controlled, enterprise to grow, as it seems certain that it will grow, it will become more and more important to enlist the back-bench members of the House of Commons in controlling and executive functions auxiliary to those of the departmental ministers. There was a time when some purpose was served by the rule that M.P.'s should not, without special conditions, hold offices of profit under the Crown. But those were the days of Crown and ministerial patronage; and their conditions hardly apply to our own days of widening public administration and control.

Mr. Gerald Barry and the "News Chronicle"

We congratulate Mr. Gerald Barry on his appointment as Managing Editor of the *News Chronicle*. Mr. Barry first leapt into fame when, as Editor of the old *Saturday Review*, he refused outside dictatorship and founded the *Week-end Review*. In 1934 he joined the staff of the *News Chronicle*. He became a Director of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION when the *Week-end Review* was amalgamated with it. We wish him every success in his new position.

All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.1. The postage on this issue is: Inland, 1d.; Foreign, 1½d.; Canada, 1d.

LABOUR AND THE ARMS RACE

WE have entered upon a new armaments race—the race which, as Sir Edward Grey said prophetically in 1912, leads only to revolution or war. We all know if we are honest with ourselves, that that is the fact: if the Government plea that we are arming in order to be able to carry out our obligations were sincere, we should not be inactive while Abyssinians, whose territory and independence we are pledged to protect, are being slaughtered by Italian aeroplanes. Now that we have the definite collaboration of the French fleet and of the other Mediterranean forces at the disposal of the League, the pretence that effective sanctions are still postponed because of shortage of power is too thin to convince a rabbit. The reason is not lack of arms, but lack of will. The issue is between the democratic, Socialist, and international elements in Europe and the anti-democratic and Fascist elements. The British Government has not made it clear which side it is on. Mr. Baldwin's notorious honesty, though somewhat tarnished since the Laval-Hoare proposals, is still used as a cover; he is like the official in one of Tchekov's stories who, asked if he was honest, replied: "Of course I am honest, but I have a family to keep." Mr. Baldwin's family is the Conservative Party and the interests which the Conservative Party exists to preserve, especially the City, the F.B.I., the arms manufacturers and the aeroplane and oil interests. To these must be added the fighting services and all those who desire to maintain the *status quo* in the colonies and whose minds have not risen above the traditional belief in state sovereignty. Politically it is a mixture of die-hards who openly support Fascism abroad and rejoice that a white race is bombing a black; democratic Conservatives like Mr. Eden, who have seen farther, but who carry little weight in their Party; and the numerous intermediate followers of Mr. Baldwin who do not want to scrap the League but who are unwilling to face the conditions implied in its membership.

The result is a fatal compromise; no definition of policy, but armaments for no policy, or for any policy for which a more reactionary successor to Mr. Baldwin may think fit to use them. For the moment, Mr. Baldwin still suits as Premier, since by paying lip-service to the Covenant he continues to hold the Opposition in the trap in which it was caught at the general election. If the Government meant to make the League a reality and armaments were genuinely necessary for a collective security policy, Labour could have only technical and secondary criticisms of the Government rearmament programme. In private the idea that British armaments might be used for any other than an exclusively Imperial purpose is not taken seriously in the Conservative party. They are wanted because the Government does not believe in the League and knows that Europe is returning to the old system of the Balance of Power. And, in spite of the recent improvement in our relations with Russia, the assumption in armament and die-hard circles is still that we are arming in order that Germany may more certainly eschew Western ambitions with the understanding that we shall not object to any Eastern adventure. For this purpose, the project is still to "reform" the League so that it will be reduced to a new edition of the Holy Alliance.

Now in these circumstances what course is open to the Opposition—not only the official Labour Party, but to all those who signed the Peace Ballot and who understood the new idea of international organisation embodied in the League? How are they to enforce the idea that Fascism, whose creed is a hundred per cent. national egotism, is incompatible with any system of collective security? How are they to express their shame that instead of a determined effort to stop this war, we are acting a hypocritical and cowardly role? How can they give voice to their convictions that it is foolish to look for support against a future aggressor in the Power which is now the aggressor; that the only way to save the League is to show that aggression does not pay and, instead of saving Mussolini, to work for the emergence of the democratic and Socialist elements that he has crushed in Italy?

The problem is soluble because of two things. First, Labour is pledged to the conception of the Covenant as a superior loyalty to the State and to the League as the centre of a growing international system where the democratic and Socialist member-States can, if they will, genuinely pool their security and co-operate politically and economically as good neighbours. Secondly, Labour support is necessary to the Government. Arming to-day means national mobilisation and depends on the consent not only of the House of Commons, but also of the mass of citizens, of the Trade Unions and the workers in the shops and factories. And such support, as the Peace Ballot showed, is only forthcoming for a League policy—which is the reason why the Government talks about collective security even while it betrays it. For the public really does understand to-day that a new arms race and a renewal of the Balance of Power means war; it really does know that war is a final calamity, and it does not believe that it is inevitable. In this new public opinion, manifest first in the Peace Ballot, and then in the tempest that swept away the Hoare-Laval proposals, is the hopeful beginning of a politically effective demand for a peace policy.

The struggle of politics to-day is for the capture of this popular demand for peace. That is why Fascists in France and Great Britain now declare that they are the true pacifists, that is why Labour's demand for serious sanctions is absurdly called war-mongering. If the new awakening to the issue of peace or war becomes allied to nationalism, which is to-day the political religion of those who defend capitalism, the nascent demand for a collective system will be corrupted into a means of preparing the people psychologically for the next world war. If it becomes allied to Socialism, which is to-day the economic creed of those who believe in the necessity of effective world government, it can rally the British people to a new effort to create an international system of peace.

We publish to-day a remarkable letter from a correspondent who reminds us that there is in the Labour movement not only the strong out-and-out pacifist movement led by Mr. Lansbury, but also a militant pacifism which may yet combine with Mr. Lansbury's movement into an important political force. It would already be the dominant force of the Labour movement if the rank and file had not hoped that a Labour Government would return to office and have an opportunity of striving to recreate a

genuine League at Geneva. When the next Labour Conference meets, the League as an organisation in which honest men can believe may be dead and the drift towards war may be even more obvious. We shall not be surprised if in these circumstances the views expressed in "Covenanter's" letter represent the views of a very large section of the rank and file of the movement, which will not tamely submit to falling in behind the National Government. If "Covenanter" correctly analyses the history of the development of Labour's foreign policy, the views of Labour leaders at next week's debate on oil sanctions might well be expressed in some such way as this: "No war can be fought, whatever Government is in power, without the co-operation of the workers. The collective system is the only bridge between the workers and a capitalist Government. A strong collective system is alone capable of stopping the arms race. In proportion as the collective system fades out, the British people will be driven to choose between revolution or resigning itself to an inevitable war as the end of the arms race. If the Labour Movement is driven by the destruction of the collective system to choose between revolution or war, there is no doubt which we shall choose. We have not forgotten the horrors of the war to end war, the fifteen years of promises since then, and the immeasurable evils of modern war; nor have we forgotten that we are Socialists, who are part of the international Socialist movement and pledged to put loyalty to world peace before allegiance to a Government that drifts towards war as a result of betraying the League.

"We warn the Government, therefore, that its policy in the Italo-Abyssinian conflict will be regarded by us as a final test. We shall hold the Government strictly responsible for the results of its policy. If it compounds with Mussolini's felony and condones his aggression Labour will draw the conclusion that this Government has abandoned the collective system and reverted to power politics and international anarchy. In the conditions of international anarchy any war will be fought in order to maintain the Balance of Power, or to support an ally's views of his rights, or to enforce the Government's views of British colonial or commercial interests. These are not things for which the Labour movement is prepared to fight or to support a capitalist Government in war. On the contrary, we warn the Government now that if they continue to refuse to apply sanctions effectively, and if they allow this war to end in an Imperialist deal with Mussolini, Labour's reply will be to organise the masses for refusal to fight, or to work, for this Government in any war on any pretext. And we shall begin our campaign now by explaining to the people how this Government have already betrayed every pledge they gave at the election and why the only way to stop them finally destroying the League and with it the world's hope of peace is to make it more dangerous for them to go on letting down the League than to apply the Covenant loyally and effectively. If the Government accuse us of splitting the nation on the issue of self-defence, we reply that it is they who are splitting it by repudiating their election pledges and by destroying the collective system. If they assert that they are not betraying the collective system, we reply by pointing to the contrast between their past promises and present performance. If they refuse either to amend their policy so as to satisfy the Opposition that they are loyal to the collective system or to go to the country, Labour's reply will be to push on with its campaign for organising passive resistance to any and every war, and Labour will hold the Government responsible for the dangerous situation that will arise if they persist in a course that will make it impossible to achieve national unity in case of war."

THE PEOPLE'S FOOD

WE were told the other day by Mr. Walter Elliot that the Government's policy is "good and cheap food for our people and a decent living for men on the land." It sounds admirable. But we have also been told, on the unquestioned authority of Sir John Orr, that some four and a half million of our people are spending no more than 4*s*. a week per head on food. The consumption of eggs, fruit, vegetables and meat, he declares, ought to be increased by from 12 to 25 per cent.—and by twice that amount if we want to bring the diet up to the level of the well-to-do classes. As for the "decent living for men on the land," the vast majority of them, the agricultural labourers, are getting a wage of 32*s*. or 33*s*. a week. The National Government has now been in office for well over four years, and it would seem, therefore, that their policy consists in words rather than deeds, in much boasting and small achievement. Anyone who doubts that should study the debate on the milk question in the House of Commons last Monday. It began with an encomium on the Government by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture for their action in providing cheap milk for children. There followed for some five hours a stream of damning criticism and of constructive proposals from the Opposition. And at the end the Minister of Agriculture employed all the art of which he is a master in fencing with the criticism and rejecting the proposals.

Of course we all welcomed the Government's discovery in 1934 that milk was a valuable food, and that a good way of disposing of the Marketing Board's "surplus" was to put it into the bellies of the undernourished. But it is far from the truth to say, as Mr. Ramsbotham said in the House on Monday, that "the supply of milk in schools has won the complete approval of the nation." The nation's approval is highly qualified. Two and three-quarter million schoolchildren are receiving a daily ration of milk. But for most of them the ration is too small—what is one-third of a pint per day?—and for many the cost, even at ½*d*., is too great. Nor is this all. There are 2,800,000 children who are not getting any milk at school; and this state of affairs is worst, as the Parliamentary Secretary pointed out, in some of the rural counties, where one would expect fresh milk to be most easily obtainable. In any case, whatever may be the difficulties in obtaining it, in those areas or anywhere else, they could obviously be overcome if the Government as well as the local authorities were in earnest. Nor will the nation be satisfied till they are overcome; for the nation, we venture to say, attaches greater importance to the judgments of experts who show how the consumption of milk increases the height and weight of children, than to cock-and-bull stories told by politicians of schoolgirls refusing to drink milk because it interferes with slimming. There ought, in short, to be milk for every schoolchild—far more milk than is allowed at present. And, if we had sense, it would be free milk and not merely cheap milk.

But that is not the end of the matter. There are many besides the children at school who need more milk—children under five and nursing mothers, patients at hospitals and clinics, and millions of adults, whether unemployed or in work, who cannot pay the price that is demanded for it to-day. There is no need here to go into the figures of working class incomes

or to recall the calculations by the British Medical Association and other investigators of the minimum sums that will provide an adequate nourishment. It is clear that the problem of disposing of the "surplus" is no problem at all, if it is regarded in the right way. There is in fact, as Mr. Tom Johnston said, no surplus; there never has been, and there cannot be a surplus until every citizen gets enough. But the Government look at the matter in the wrong way, and they are taken to task by their critics inside and outside the House for a policy which deliberately limits the amount of liquid milk in favour of milk used for manufacture. Sir Francis Acland pointed out that there was a rise, as between September 1934 and September 1935, of only 25,000,000 gallons in the liquid milk consumed, while the figure for factory milk went up between those same dates by 109,000,000 gallons. "Why," as the *Times* asks, "should not some of the milk now poured into factories be poured down human throats?" To that question Mr. Elliot makes a feeble and confused reply. His boast of the increase in the consumption of liquid milk does not meet the point, which is that the increase is deplorably small. He treats those who complain of the vast amount of milk going to the factory as though they were urging that none at all should go, or even pretending that cheese or butter are not food. And he concludes with a vague, general and unconvincing defence of the marketing boards and the organised producers. The charge, in short, as put by Miss Rathbone, is left unanswered:

> This measure has done nothing practically to increase the consumption of liquid milk beyond what has been drunk in the schools. The consumption of milk has increased by just about the same amount as the amount given to schoolchildren. The Government are doing something substantial towards giving a push to the process of putting more milk into cans and turning more milk into products that could just as well be produced abroad.

But the Minister's plea for the producers raises some fundamental questions. Nobody denies that the agricultural producers have been hit hard, or that it was necessary to find remedies for their distresses. The marketing boards scheme may be laudable in intention; but in its present form, and as it operates under the existing economic regime, it is open to strong objection. Producers' control is a menace to the legitimate interests of the consumers, unless those interests are carefully safeguarded. Here the safeguards are farcical, and each one of the monopolistic boards has pursued in its own way the policy of restricting supply and keeping up or enhancing prices. When the boards were set up there was no proper consultation of bodies representing the consumers; the organs which now purport to represent them have no real power. A genuine Consumers' Council, such as is badly needed, is not within the purview of Mr. Elliot and his friends. In some cases, moreover, and particularly in that of the Milk Board, the problem of the middleman is a grave complication. The conflict between producer and consumer—which would not exist in a rationally organised society—is turned into a triangular struggle, where farmer and distributor fight each other or combine together at the expense of the public. It is clear that the present price of milk is the great obstacle to any wide increase in its consumption, and Sir Edward Grigg and other speakers last Monday were right in hammering at this point and in raising the question of the distributors' profits. The chairman of United Dairies has recently said that he considers 11½d. per gallon to be a "reasonable margin." If it is, then the sooner some other distributive agency is substituted for this great capitalistic combine the better. That does not mean, of course, that the remedy is to spread the business over an army of little milkmen. The case of Merthyr Tydfil was quoted the other day, where in a town of 71,000 inhabitants there are 137 separate distributors, each handling on an average 14 gallons of milk a day, and each struggling to make his own profit. That sort of system, it is evident, offers small hope of cheapening distributive costs and reducing the price to the consumer.

In the long run a fair deal for producer and consumer will be achieved by the elimination of the capitalist middleman, big or little, and the transfer of his functions to publicly controlled or co-operative agencies—and it is not likely to be achieved in any other way. In the meantime, the Government are pledged to the policy of "good and cheap food for the people, and a decent living for men on the land." Unless that is to remain a piece of sheer humbug, they will have to do more than raise an eyebrow at the "reasonable margins" of the distributors. Some remarkable evidence on this point has been given to the commission of investigation of the Milk Marketing Board. Perhaps the report, when it comes, will stimulate the Minister of Agriculture to a little bolder thinking and action on behalf of the millions who are in need of milk, and of eggs, fruit, vegetables and meat.

A LONDON DIARY

How wise of the German Government to forbid the showing of the new Chaplin film! The reason given is that it has Communistic tendencies—though I have also heard it suggested that Charlie's moustache might lead to unfortunate comparisons with Adolf's. The real reason is that it is a protest against everything in contemporary civilisation which threatens a man's right to call his soul his own. Mr. Chaplin stands for all a Nazi leader said the other day the Nazis had killed—"former false principles of humanity." The machine is the villain of this film. Mr. Chaplin has a place incomparably above every other film actor or producer, because he has created a legendary figure, probably the only acceptable and accepted myth which our age has produced. This "Charlie" has something of Don Quixote, something even of Christ: he is the Jack who kills the giant, the lamb who defeats the slaughterers, the elastic indomitable spirit which overcomes the rigidity of brute force. It used to be merely strong and brutal men on whom he turned the tables, now it is machinery, not only cogs and pistons and the moving belt, but the machinery of law. Again and again we see him carried off in the police van, only to emerge from gaol into the harsher imprisonment of working life. And perhaps the most moving moment in the film is when the sirens of the reopened factory sound, and Charlie leaves his romantic shack to submit himself again to crucifixion by machinery. That he should choose to do so signifies, I think, an enrichment of the myth—the individual admits the claim of the community, but the claim then becomes exorbitant. But for the Nazi no such claim is exorbitant, and the community is not a means but an end.

* * *

The *Times* has been running an exceptionally interesting correspondence on the subject of the Heidelberg invitation to the British Universities. I thought Sir Charles Grant Robertson's letter final. He states that forty-four members of the staff of the University have been deprived of their posts for racial, religious or political reasons since 1933. There seems to be no reason why representatives of British Universities should pay a visit specifically to congratulate on its record of academic achievement an institution whose claim to the title of "University" may now be seriously questioned. Moreover, however much British visitors may disown Nazi sympathies, it is certain that the German press and wireless will exploit their presence to propagate the idea that British Universities condone the proscriptive measures that German Universities have adopted. Any kind-hearted Professor who wants to show his friendship for Germany by going to Heidelberg may expect to find that he is represented as approving of Jew-baiting and of a Totalitarian State. The most comic contribution to the discussion came from Sir Arnold Wilson, who told us that, after a long interview with Herr Kerrl, the sympathetic Reichsminister for Church affairs, he was sure that a way would be "found to reconcile the claims of churches in Germany with those of the German State." I seem to remember the same thing being said about the Jews.

I like the candour of the Tory M.P. who suggested in the House of Commons debate on the Education Bill that the school-leaving age should be lowered to thirteen. The proposal met with no widespread support, but I think the feeling that there is really too much and not too little working-class education is only just below the surface of the minds of quite a number of Conservatives, and that it explains Lord Eustace Percy's passion for technical education. I am all in favour of technical education, but not as a substitute for that minimum of mental training without which the child cannot grow into an intelligent citizen. When education was first made compulsory Lowe said that we must "educate our masters." To-day it is considered safer not to educate them in case they should really become "our masters." Propaganda is substituted for higher education except for the selected few whom it is hoped to absorb safely into the ruling class. The point which people often forget is that the reason for raising the school-leaving age was not merely to extend the length of time at school, but by the addition of another year to make possible reorganisation and improvement in the quality of education. Some idea of how great an improvement is possible even under present circumstances can be obtained by looking at two little volumes called *A History of English Life* by Amabel Williams-Ellis and F. J. Fisher (Methuen), which have just been published. They provide an intelligent background of the world we live in; it is not a list of unco-ordinated events, but a very readable economic history for children. It describes what life was like in different centuries, the food people ate, the clothes they wore, the houses they lived in, the ways in which they gained their livelihood, and it is enlivened by a delightful series of charts and sketches which are as amusing as informative. The most orthodox champion of the older type of history should be delighted by the picture of King John "dying of a surfeit," for no child who has seen it is likely to forget the date of that solemn occurrence. To a child who has read these books there is some chance of political history meaning something.

* * *

The Eugenics Society has in recent months performed a considerable service by the informative articles published in its review on compulsory eugenic practice in Germany—a subject upon which accurate and objective information is difficult to get. The Society has also drawn up a carefully planned schedule for a Health Examination before Marriage. Now Mr. Julian Huxley at the Galton lecture on Monday urged with wisdom and imagination a new outlook for the scope and method of eugenics. He stated categorically that the main task of eugenics at the moment should be the study of the existing social system and the attempt to transform it into one favourable to later methods of selective breeding. I thought I noticed the older generation of eugenists stirring a little uneasily in their seats as they sat at dinner while Mr. Huxley told them that until environment was equalised between the classes there was no scientific basis for the statement that the lower average stature, physique and intelligence of the lower economic strata in Britain was due to innate inferiority.

* * *

Readers of "This England" must have noticed some astonishing extracts recently from the sayings of dog-lovers. Now I claim to be fond of dogs myself and I regard our national affection for animals as one of the most amiable of British characteristics. But what is the sociological explanation of a recent series of articles by Mr. James Douglas on the death of his dog Bunch, who reminded him, he told us, of his old father and who had all the Christian and other virtues? Why does the dramatic critic of the *Morning Post* say that James Bridie's *Storm in a Teacup* is "a play that would appeal to every dog-lover, which means every playgoer worth having in a theatre"? What does even the most humane of foreigners make of the newspaper accounts of Cruft's Show describing the dogs which "lolled on their benches, some sipping tea and eating ham sandwiches"? Excellent in itself. I used to have a dog which did all these things. But the remarkable point is the decision apparently to treat dogs in the press as if they were human beings. A recent correspondent in the *Times* wrote as follows:

> Some years ago I had a wire-haired fox terrier (no longer with me, alas!) who accompanied me exquisitely in Dvōrak's "Songs My Mother Taught Me" (sung in German). His faint, mournful wailing on the high notes of the song deeply moved all who heard it.

Really! What is one to make of that?

* * *

A teacher at a well-known nursery school in the East End of London sends me some interesting examples of the remarks made to her by her pupils on the morning after the King's death. One small boy said: "Oh, Miss, the King's dead; but it's all right. The Prince of Wales says he'll carry on." The second example is fantastic. "The King's dead, Miss, and if you go to Buckingham Palace in three days' time you'll see him go up to heaven—like a little bird." "Who told you that?" asked somebody. "God came and whispered it in the King's ear, and the Queen heard him." I offer no explanation of this association of ideas. But the third remark is quite easy to understand, and offers a remarkable testimony either to tradition or advertisement—I'm not sure which. "My father says," declared one urchin, "that if the King 'ad 'ad a drop o' beer he'd a' bin alive to-day."

* * *

I must crib a joke from a fellow Diary writer in America. He saw in an English paper that Eden was a cultivated man who lived in an Adam house. He added that Adam was an uncultivated man who lived in Eden. CRITIC.

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mr. Ford Jenkins.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

I am not superstitious, but I once walked under a ladder and when I got home our poor old dog died. I know he was ill, but he ought not to have died so soon.—Letter in *Lowestoft Journal*.

Mr. Andrew Robertson, a contractor, of Hillerd, Inverkeithing, petitioned at Dunfermline for the exhumation of his wife's body, on the ground that she was buried in the same grave as her father and that he objected to being buried there also. "I want to be buried beside my wife," he said, "but I am not going to lie next to James Mercer. If I could not agree with him on this side, I may not agree with him on the other side."—*Daily Herald*.

Eleven Blackshirts attended as bodyguard to a national speaker who visited Loughborough last night, the audience numbering 13. The speaker was Mr. A. Raven Thompson, director of policy, B.U.F. —*Leicester Evening Mail*.

Life goes on, and *Vogue*, which reflects a varied and fundamental part of life, must go on too.—*Vogue*.

There is too much sloppy talk about the oppressor and the oppressed, for in this case the oppressor is certainly Abyssinia, which has again and again in the past defied Italy's desire to impose decent Government upon it.—*Saturday Review*.

Sir Paul Dukes, who wrote the *Gossip* here a few weeks ago, spent the week-end with me recently. As we walked across the lawn he got down on his hands, cocked his legs up into the air, and continued to walk beside me. Apparently one must keep fit in the Intelligence Service.—Provincial paper.

Mr. Masefield, who has been paying his sixth visit to the United States, added that he did little work, as he had been unable to obtain inspiration in that country.—*Evening Standard*, February 12th.

Mr. John Masefield . . . "Social conditions are infinitely better than they were three years ago," he said. "Contrary to some reports, I did not find America uninspiring. In many ways it is one of the most inspiring places on this planet."—*Daily Express*, February 13th.

A REPLY TO JOAD

[In this article Mr. Louis Fischer, our Moscow correspondent, replies to Mr. Joad's article on "The Re-appearance of Sin" in Russia, published in this journal a fortnight ago. The drawings by Pearl Binder contrast the artist's own impression of life in Moscow with what she believes to be Professor Joad's impression.—Ed., N.S. & N.].

FORTUNATELY, I know next to nothing about Prof. Joad, and I have deliberately refrained from consulting Britishers here who might enlighten me. I do not know how intense, prolonged and careful his study of Soviet conditions has been. For morals are much more difficult to understand than economics or political systems. Daily contact with average citizens in various walks of life is essential to anyone who ventures to construct a theory about emerging Soviet ethical standards. Russia lives very quickly. Observation is hard; prophecy is hazardous. A judgment should be based on vast information and deep psychological insight.

Prof. Joad's equipment, as far as it appears in this attempt, consists of data from the Webbs' great book, of a Chamberlin article, and of his own prejudices—"my own unregenerate individualism." This last quality was temporarily "charmed away" by the Webbs. Under the impact of the best available presentation of Soviet civilisation, Prof. Joad felt the nobility and splendour of what is going on in the U.S.S.R. But he fought against the devil. He "stopped (his) ears against the siren Webbs," and then, of course, only the still small voice of Joad remained. The real answer to Mr. Joad, accordingly, might well be an analysis of Mr. Joad and his prejudices rather than of his very inadequate treatment of a complicated phase of Soviet life. Does the professor really believe that Russia goes to bed at 11 p.m. or that anyone ever urged it to do so? In rest homes and sanatoria where overworked people try to restore their energy and nerves a regime is naturally adhered to. But when Mr. Joad suggests that this is a universal "puritanical restriction" and that it will continue even into the classless society one can only invite him for an after-midnight walk through Moscow streets.

Mr. Joad confesses that his "excursion" afforded him "considerable fun." I want now to assure him that it afforded at least as much fun to my Soviet friends. They laughed at the idea of early bedtime, or of anti-smoking propaganda except among tender youths whom cigarettes and cigarette ends expose to contagion and other unhealthy effects. Mr. Joad, however, has one fact right: there is little public spooning in Russia. He could, if he came here, see plenty of hand-holding and courting in the parks and boulevards. But this is a brief stage, and the Russians being a healthy, simple, normal race, the couples soon get down to business. Good taste demands that whatever spooning is done be done privately in the dark where it is more pleasant. The Communist party has not yet issued any instructions regulating this activity; unregenerate individualism rules supreme.

Now as to sexual relations. Soviet citizens usually marry early after a period of trial which no one encourages or discourages. Although triangles exist, easy divorce diminishes the frequency with which people, especially young people, resort to parallel relationships with more than one mate. Children complicate this matter; they must be provided for first. Otherwise, the State does not intervene unless women are exploited by men who stop for a brief moment and flit on. Yet when the party and the government initiated an intense campaign last year against the innumerable abortions and consequent undermining of women's health which result from indiscriminate sex ties, there was such a wave of resentment that the campaign ceased and the contemplated legislation denying abortions to childless women is still in abeyance. Even this mild form of puritanism provoked widespread opposition.

If Mr. Joad understands puritanism as the philosophy of bad, uncomfortable, saintly living for the sake of some distant ideal he will encounter none of it in the Soviet Union except perhaps in the office of Comrade Soltz, a veteran Bolshevik official whose view, among others, that only reproduction warrants sex, many foreign visitors unfortunately accept as descriptive of Soviet practice—which it is not. I agree with Mr. Joad that the "good life" is not "a puritanically restricted life," and since the Bolsheviks are above all logical they reject the puritanically restricted life because they really want a good life—not in the future classless society, as Mr. Joad insinuates, but this afternoon and this evening until 2 a.m. Mr. Chamberlin, the "mathematically minded correspondent," is right in saying that wives of commissars who attend an annual diplomatic reception in company with foreign diplomats wear gowns which "cost about four times the average monthly wage of a Russian worker." But it is also true that plain average Russian working girls whom I know will likewise spend two months' wages on a frock: part of to-day's good life. The authorities minister to this tendency by establishing beauty parlours, dress-making emporiums, well-stocked fancy shops, de luxe hotels, cafés with jazz orchestras, ornate cinema houses, etc. Nothing, the Bolsheviks maintain, is too good for the Soviet citizen. Mr. Joad and certainly many others seem to suppose that the socialist millennium will be a dry, colourless, smile-less, pleasure-less undifferentiated bore. The Bolsheviks think just the reverse. They want everyone to live well and richly now. The ideal of Bolshevism is not austerity much less self-denial. Mr. Joad, therefore, is a thousand times wrong when he says: "The good life, we may concede, can only be lived in the classless society, and until this has been achieved, there is no time to bother about such things." Let him read any Soviet daily to find endless refutations of this wholly false assertion.

Prof. Joad's ignorance of the facts leads him into serious contradiction. On the one hand, he notes a (non-existent) ideal of puritanism. This presumably is the basis of all further development. But then he learns that women wear expensive dresses. "Is this so or is it not so?" he demands. Yes, it is so. Ergo, concludes the professor, "the justification of the new puritanism disappears." That is quite correct except that it never appeared. Mr. Joad mistakes a readiness temporarily to sacrifice material benefits in order to build up necessary national industries—that period is largely over now—for an ethical ideal. No purgatory leads into the classless society.

I deduce, from Mr. Joad's frock example, that he regards puritanism and inequality as incompatible. Then too there is no puritanism in Russia. Bolshevism is not an equalitarian system directed against individualism. It is not directed against individualism at all. Degenerate individuals are put in their place. But Soviet Communism, I am sure the Webbs will agree, seeks to foster the highest flower of the individual.

Indeed, the Bolsheviks argue that this is possible only under collectivism. Individualism and collectivism are complementary and inseparable. The seeming individualism of individualistic society is individualism for a favoured and fortunate few, maintained, sometimes without their wishing or realising it, at the expense of the many. Collectivism is individualism for all made possible by the release of new productive forces and the removal of social dead weight. The individualism of the "unregenerate individualist" is usually a luxury. Compare the comfortably situated individualistic intellectual with a miner or unemployed working man who has the same tendency towards individualism but can give it no outlet. In a derelict area, a man's family life, sex life, education, outlook on life and therefore ethical standards will be influenced, probably even determined, by his economic status. Yet Mr. Joad would contend that "in social ethics, it is the individual, not the community, which is at once the source and the standard of values." Every individual, undoubtedly, has a certain amount of free play, but in most individualistic communities a narrow layer of society fixes standards and then the community conforms.

In the U.S.S.R., the individualism of many intellectuals and artists is unwisely restricted. Intellectuals and artists do not always have the freedom indispensable to great creative work. They enjoy privileges and advantages unknown to their colleagues in bourgeois states, but that scarcely makes the restrictions less damaging. On the other hand, the revolution has developed the individualities of millions, indeed tens of millions of Soviet citizens. The Bolshevik revolution was an elemental phenomenon: the masses, long separated from light and air by a thin crust of aristocrats, plutocrats and landlords, burst through to the surface and for the first time asserted their place in the sun. How many scientists, engineers, factory directors, political leaders, teachers, inventors, actors, writers, painters, etc., have come up out of the dark depths in these seventeen years! But for the revolution, the bulk of them would still be peasants and backward workers with little education and no vision. Soviet Russia is the new land of opportunity. Initiative and ambition are aroused. The incentive to do and achieve is everywhere stimulated. Young leaders emerge in the steppes of Kazakstan, in the Siberian taiga, far off in Yakutia, among Tartars, Uzbeks, Ukrainians, among races and classes formerly deprived of rights and possibilities. The Soviet nation and each one of its human units are inspired by an impulse towards greatness which the world prefers to ignore now but which will startle and conquer. The Bolshevik regime draws men forward, pushes them forward—it is the individualism of collectivism. It is part of a grandiose, epochal process of re-making a country on unprecedented lines. Prof. Joad caught its spirit in his first reading of the Webbs. Why did he sink back into himself?

LOUIS FISCHER

MEAT

"I THINK," a man said to me the other day, "I would rather be dead than give up wine. I would certainly rather be dead than give up meat." That is a point of view that I have never been able to understand—or, at least, to share. In practice, I seldom give things up; but I often look forward to giving things up and find the prospect rather agreeable. I am convinced that I could live a perfectly happy life without this, that, or the other thing. There are men who say that they would rather die than give up tobacco—an absurd choice, it seems to me, since it all but implies that before the discovery of tobacco life was not worth living. I do not wish to disparage tobacco, but I wonder whether the human race would have been much less happy to-day if the virtues of the tobacco-plant had never become known.

And, if life without tobacco is worth living, it seems to me that life without meat is even more so, since it is easier to find a substitute for meat than for tobacco. Apart from this, how many people are there who owe very much of their happiness to meat? Do memories of meat throng our minds when we contemplate the past? The gourmet, it may be, milestones his life with great dishes eaten in great restaurants or in the houses of his fellow-gourmets; but the gourmet is as unnatural and as rare as the ballet-dancer. He possesses the genius of eating, but he does so at the cost of no longer being a normal human being. The normal human being—perhaps it would be better to say "the normal Englishman"—is a utilitarian at his food. He eats his meals as a necessary part of the day's routine, neither looking forward to them with anticipatory rapture nor looking back on them through a haze of emotion. He enjoys eating, but that is mainly because a craving is thereby satisfied. If, however, he had not a superstitious belief that meat is more strengthening than vegetables, he would be perfectly happy on a diet of beans and cauliflower.

We have various reasons for suspecting that the pleasures of meat-eating have been exaggerated. One is that no great poet has ever addressed to meat lines as ecstatic as he has addressed even to the humbler flowers of the field. Wordsworth was obviously more profoundly moved by the sight of a lesser celandine than by the sight of a saddle of mutton. Shakespeare never put into the mouth of a heroine a catalogue of meat dishes to rival Perdita's catalogue of flowers. The birds of which the poet sings are not birds on the table, but birds in the freedom of the air. Keats was a poet with appetites, yet he never hymned roast pheasant as he hymned the Hampstead nightingale. When Browning's thoughts turned home to England in April, he longed to be in England, not in order to be in time to eat the last pork of the season, but in order to hear the thrush and the whitethroat. Go through the great poets, and you will find that in their attitude to meat there is not a tittle of evidence of romantic love, of that spirit of adoration without which, it seems to me, life is not worth living. Homer's characters are least interesting when they are eating. Meat-eating has been celebrated comically by Ben Jonson and others, but the great lyric in praise of meat has yet to be written. The very word, "meat" is slightly disgusting. "Mutton" is not disgusting but ugly. The language of the butcher's shop contains scarcely a word that a poet could use. "Rump steak," "chump chop," "kidney," "calves' liver," "tripe," "pig's cheek," "trotters," "sausages"—what a list of barbarities of speech! During the war, we were made to realise how revolting is the butcher's vocabulary when a number of the meats I have mentioned were officially classified as "offals." Can it really be said that our happiness depends on our consumption of things so basely named? I doubt it. If meat had been intended to inspire us to divine enthusiasm, Nature would have provided us with a vocabulary adequate to our raptures. Think of the brutally prosaic quality of the word "joint." I can recall at the moment only two really beautiful words relating to meat—"sirloin" and "saddle." For the rest, I do not wonder that the English restaurants conceal the hideous names of their meat dishes by translating them into a foreign tongue.

Even birds acquire ugly, or at least commonplace, names when they become edible. Compare, for example, "hen," with "willow-wren," "duck" with "goldfinch," "goose" with "firecrest." Some of the game birds, I grant you, are happier in their names, but, even so, the plover on a dish has never stirred emotions as deep as the plover crying among the martyrs' graves.

Now I am one of those who are convinced that the things that make life most worth living are the things about which men write poetry. I conclude, therefore, that, as no great poetry has been written about meat, meat-eating cannot be one of the things that make life most worth living. It is no more than one of the minor pleasures of life, and I doubt whether it is even one of the chief of the minor pleasures. If it gave us as much pleasure as, say, reading or looking at birds, none of us would enjoy—enthusiastically enjoy—eating alone. Yet who, except an extreme gourmet, could enjoy

spending his evenings dining alone in one great restaurant after another on the choicest dishes? If meat-eating were one of the things that make life worth living, thousands of us would be doing this (if we had the means). We should even, I think, resent the presence of company at the table that would interrupt the flow of our sensations as with teeth and tongue we prepared the flavours of exquisite foods for their journey through our beings. Yet, so far as my experience goes, the men who talk most about food cannot bear to be left alone with food. They cannot enjoy the meat they praise except in company. You see them in restaurants surrounded by their guests, chattering away—probably about Communism. I am firmly persuaded that no man, when among the things he really loves, has any thoughts to spare for Communism or for anything else except the things beloved. The bird-lover, catching sight of the first swallow, is rapt into a world above politics. See a salmon leaping up the swirling falls of the mountain river and the news in the day's paper fades from your mind. At sight of a close finish for the Gold Cup, how you would hate a neighbour who tried to engage you in irrelevant conversation! Yet the meat-eater actually likes to have his alleged ecstasies broken in upon. He will talk about *Mutiny on the Bounty* while eating the most exquisite dishes, and will discuss the Abyssinian War when all his thoughts should be of chicken. I have, I admit, met one or two men who turned a meal into a long series of exclamations of delight. They shouted with joy through the duck course, like spectators at a football match. I was almost persuaded at the time that such raptures as theirs should be set to Mozartian music. The common gourmet, however, takes part in no such chorus. He is a conversationalist first and a gourmet afterwards. He would, I am convinced, prefer a second-best meal in company to the best meal without it. For myself, I confess, my notion of purgatory would be to be doomed to sit alone, day after day, eating a perfect lunch and a perfect dinner in a perfect restaurant. I could give up meat more easily than I could give up company, and, without company, meat is merely a comparatively pleasant means of ending my hunger.

If good vegetarian cooks were easy to find, indeed I should feel it no great hardship to be forbidden ever to eat meat again. I owe much of my sustenance, but little of my positive happiness, to meat-eating, and I have obtained from meat-eating none of those exhilarations—exhilarations lasting in the memory—that I have obtained from smoking and drinking. And even as regards smoking and drinking I cannot believe that either of them is necessary to a happy life. I might find some difficulty in giving them up to-morrow, but I have no objection to the idea of giving them up to-morrow. On the whole, I envy the non-smoker and teetotaller, provided he is not a non-smoker or teetotaller on principle. He has achieved a freedom not yet mine, and, as Herr Hitler has told us, without freedom life is not worth living.

A little private means, a little house in the country, a few books, a pair of field-glasses, a wireless set, a gramophone, and a little faith in the future—with these I can imagine myself living a perfectly happy life, even though I were never to taste meat, wine or tobacco again. It is the townsman, not the man, in me that craves for such things. The man in me is an abstainer in embryo, and abstains from abstaining only because he lacks those private means. Y. Y.

Correspondence

LABOUR AND WAR

SIR,—The boldest and least familiar part of the Labour Party's foreign policy is its commitment to a world peace loyalty. What this means is described in *For Socialism and Peace*, Labour's official "Programme of Action." What world peace loyalty meant was explained by the late Mr. Arthur Henderson on behalf of the Executive and afterwards semi-officially elaborated by him to the Party Conference at Southport. He wrote:

> Labour contends that it has . . . become the moral and political duty of all good citizens to regard the Covenant of the League as a world constitution which is a prolongation of our national constitution. The Covenant, we hold, is binding, not only on the Government but on the Opposition and on every individual citizen. We are all of us responsible for the way in which our country discharges the duties it has assumed, as a member of the League, with regard to the preservation of peace. . . . So long as the real belief of politicians and the man in the street is that patriotism means "my government right or wrong," all pacts and treaties will be mere scraps of paper. In the conditions of international anarchy the natural and spontaneous feeling of love of country was worked up into a blind and exclusive fanaticism, for citizens were taught that their supreme duty was to obey the government whatever happened, even on the life and death issue of war. . . .
>
> The existence of the League and our membership of the League, Labour claims, has transformed the situation. Specifically it means that loyalty to the world community on the issue of peace overrides any national duty and notably our duty to the Government in war. It can no longer be postulated that citizens owe a blind and unquestioning allegiance to their Government on the issue of war—"theirs not to reason why—theirs but to do and die." It is the duty of citizens, in virtue of their direct world peace loyalty, to judge for themselves in the light of the nation's peace undertakings and obligations, whether or not the Government has been faithful on this supreme issue to the overriding world authority of the League.
>
> Labour believes that the responsibility for stopping war ought not to be placed upon the Trade Union Movement alone. Every citizen who wants peace and every other section of the Labour Movement must share the responsibility of any organised action that might be taken to prevent or to stop war, in pursuance of the three duties of world citizenship by which the people of this country are bound. Labour is fully cognizant of the various implications of the general strike against war. . . .

The Report submitted by the National Executive Committee to the Brighton Annual Conference in 1935 begins with a section on the International Situation which contains the following passage:

> Because this country as a Member of the League and a Signatory of the Pact of Paris has renounced war as an instrument of national policy and undertaken certain duties in connection with the restoration and preservation of peace, the citizens of this country are no longer bound blindly to obey the Government if it summons them to war.
>
> The Labour Movement will give a lead to the citizens of this country in deciding, if and when an emergency arises, whether the Government should be supported or resisted. Therefore, the Government must be warned that the only way to keep the nation united on questions of peace and war is to keep the League alive.

These official texts are as clear as they are authoritative. But their significance can be fully understood only if it is realised that they represent a compromise between two different tendencies in the Labour Movement. The great majority of the Movement has always stood for wholeheartedly supporting the League and developing the collective system. But a militant minority has for a long time taken the view that the League, as an association of capitalist States, was a delusion and a snare, and that salvation must be sought, when Labour came into power, in alliances with other Socialist States, notably the U.S.S.R., and while Labour was in opposition, in preparing for a general strike against any and every war under a capitalist British Government.

At Southport the Executive, after carefully considering the situation resulting from the economic depression, Japan's and Germany's withdrawals from the League, and the impending entry of the U.S.S.R., produced a restatement of Labour's foreign policy which applied it, on the basis of a realistic analysis of the international situation, to the problems of to-day. This statement of policy did, in effect, go some way to meet the views of the minority although the latter failed to perceive the fact. It provided that when Labour came into power it was to make a new start with the League, by forming a nucleus of Socialist and democratic States, including notably the Soviet Union, that were prepared to go far beyond the Covenant in organising their common defence and economic life, and to proclaim the drawing of all nations together in a World Commonwealth as their ultimate objective. On the question of war-resistance when Labour is in opposition, it took the attitude set forth in the official documents quoted above.

Even this compromise failed to satisfy the minority. One-third of the Southport Conference voted against the *War and Peace* memorandum, on the ground that it did not go far enough in war resistance. A year later, when Italy went to war against Abys-

sinia, the Labour movement applied the first half of its world peace loyalty doctrine. Both at Margate and at Brighton the Labour Movement decided by overwhelming majorities to support any action necessary to apply the sanctions of the Covenant loyally and effectively. At Brighton it was made clear that this was done out of loyalty to the League, and that the Party maintained its critical attitude to the Government's foreign policy.

But although the minority against the official policy was small, it included several leaders of the Party and there was considerable confusion and much searching of hearts among candidates and the rank and file in the election. The way the Government took advantage of Labour's loyalty to the League to spring a snap election, in which it ran a rearmament ramp and accused the Labour Party of being "bellicose"; the subsequent revelations as to the Government's dishonesty about sanctions and its attempts to conclude an imperialist deal with Mussolini; the Government's headlong plunge into an arms race and its almost open return to the policy of alliances and the Balance of Power—these things and the graver events that will occur between now and October make it probable that at the next Annual Conference there will be a strong demand for also applying the other half of Labour's world peace loyalty, that is, the policy of war resistance against a Government that in Labour's judgment betrays the League. If the Executive does not give a lead and show how the official policy should be applied, militant minorities may seriously divide the Party, or even stampede it into a policy of despair.

COVENANTER

SIR,—Whilst I agree with you that it is necessary for us to adhere to the League of Nations to-day I am somewhat disturbed by the tendency in the Labour Movement to make the League an end in itself rather than an instrument of anti-Fascist policy. The Labour Party appears to hold the theory that the League represents the beginning of an International Parliament organically developing into the Socialist Federation of the Nations through constitutional transformations in the countries now capitalist, and their adherence to the League. Loyalty to the Covenant has become, with the Party leaders, the criterion of any Government policy. For loyalty to the Covenant they are prepared to support the Government in war.

This is a dangerous policy which has already reduced the effectiveness of the Labour Party, in that its opposition to the Government has not been based upon the struggle for Socialism but has been, and is, a mixture of Liberal Imperialism and pacifism. Witness the debate in Parliament on Mr. Lansbury's resolution and the later discussion on "defence."

There is, of course, a trend of Socialism in the Party expressed by the Socialist League. Its Chairman at the Brighton Conference referred to the League of Nations as an "International Burglars' Union," declared that the next world war would be an imperialist war similar to the last, and rejected the idea of supporting any war of which a capitalist Government was to be the custodian. Whilst it is true that this point of view enables those who hold it to wash their hands of any association with the Government's imperialist aims and motives, it is essentially an isolationist policy with all its disastrous consequences. The prospect of it being adopted by the Labour Movement is remote, because of its doctrinaire and static character.

Nevertheless something other than Liberal Imperialism is desirable for Labour's foreign policy. In my opinion a Socialist Party must determine its policy in accordance with the interests of the struggle for international Socialism. What are these interests? First, I think, the defence of Socialist and democratic countries against Fascist Imperialism which all the world recognises as the aggressor. Second, the struggle against the exploitation of this danger and of the war itself by private property interests and our own Imperialists. Third, the maintenance of the independence of the Socialist Movement and continued emphasis on the Socialist solution of the capitalist crisis of which the war danger is but a symptom.

These guiding principles should determine our attitude to the League of Nations and to peace and war or the Labour and Socialist movements will degenerate into mere appendages of the imperialist Government. The League must not be regarded by Socialists as an end in itself. At the present moment it is, and can be more so, the rallying ground against Fascist Imperialism. It may have larger possibilities, but these are dependent upon the defeat of Fascism, which is the outstanding issue in international affairs.

The application of the second principle must not be separated from our support of the first, but related to it. This will guide us in our attitude to the Imperialism of our own Government, to the re-armament question, peace and war. To attack the Imperialism of our own Government is essential, but it will be invulnerable to our attacks if we make them simply as protests against the volume of armaments, pleas for collective security and pacifism. Everything must turn on the question of the direction of the Government's policy, its concern for Fascism, its concern for its own imperialist aims and its regard for the sanctity of profits and private property. The whole question of the volume of armaments by any country or countries grouped within pacts of "collective security," will be determined by the menacing Fascist powers. So also will the issue of peace and war be determined.

Socialists can be parties neither to the imperialism of the Fascist powers nor the imperialism of the British or League Powers, with their bargainings at the expense of the colonial peoples.

But to carry through such policies, whether in peace or war, demands that the Labour Movement stands firmly by the third principle I have set down, namely, the complete independence of the Labour Movement and its refusal to enter into a coalition Government.

Much could be added in elaboration of the above, but space forbids. Sufficient for the moment to indicate principles which should govern Socialist policy in the present period.

LABOUR WORKER

WHEN IN ROME

SIR,—The press reports of the Italian "victory" in Abyssinia make nauseating reading for all of us, and I seem on occasion to detect a certain reflection of the Italians' misguided exuberance in reports from foreign correspondents in Rome. Take the following from the *Times* Rome correspondent this week:

> Army of Ras Mulugeta are in full flight . . . retreating troops are being heavily bombed and are reported to be either too weary or too dazed to take proper precautions to save themselves.

> [Ras Mulugeta's army] "had in great part been trained and equipped on European lines. Some of the finest Italian divisions took part in the attack.

> It is clear that the taking of Amba Aradam was a magnificent feat of arms. . . . The combined effects of shells and bombs appeared to have crushed even the fanatical courage of the best of the Abyssinian warriors, to whose bravery in the face of heavy losses warm tributes are, however, paid. . . . The task of harassing the fleeing Abyssinians is being left to the air force. A long column of fugitives estimated at 20,000 is said to have kept the Italian armies fully occupied yesterday. It is estimated that during the course of the day 30 tons of explosives were dropped on the enemy, who at first replied with heavy rifle fire against the low-flying machines, but later appear to have accepted their fate passively and to have abandoned stores, livestock, and even their wounded.

He reports that "the Italians are stated to have constructed a landing ground only six miles from the fighting line." Would that have been possible if the Abyssinians had been "equipped on European lines"?

The press is too full of reports on the Abyssinian fighting which completely lose sight of the fact that one great bullying nation is carrying out a wholesale slaughter, with all the latest equipment which money and brains can devise, against a comparatively defenceless people, whom we are supposed to be championing. We look to correspondents of the *Times* for objective reports, but I rather suspect, in this instance, it is a case of "When in Rome," etc.

JOHN ROBERTS

5 West Hill,
Sanderstead.

ARMS AND POLICY

SIR,—In the letter which you were good enough to print in your last issue I charged you with inconsistency. I argued that it was illogical to advocate an active foreign policy while decrying rearmament, by which alone such action could be rendered effective. You reply to my accusation with courtesy and vigour. You state that you are opposed to rearmament for an unspecified policy. You imply (and I believe rightly) that the defence of the Empire is not a "specified" policy in the sense in which you employ that term. You define such a policy as "an agreed and publicly stated programme in conjunction with other League States." And you assume that the Government intends no such policy.

I agree with your thesis, but disagree with your assumption. The Abyssinian war has shown us how difficult, in practice, it is to obtain from other League States "an agreed and publicly stated programme." It has also shown us that our communications are so vulnerable that, unless we rearm, we constitute a liability upon collective security and not an asset. It is not fair on Mr. Eden (who has inherited a mismanaged situation) to expect him to solve the Abyssinian problem by that "resolute action" which only rearmament could justify. The most that we can hope for is to achieve peace in East Africa upon such terms as will prove to the world that to defy the League is not a paying proposition. I believe that we shall secure such terms.

You regard the Abyssinian problem as a test of future intentions. I regard it as a lesson for future guidance. I believe that rearmament will provide us with sufficient authority to enable us to negotiate and to enforce that "agreed and publicly stated programme" which you advocate. Compared to the menace of a second German war, the Abyssinian muddle is a mere incident. I am confident that, once the Abyssinian problem has been liquidated, Mr. Eden will devote all his energies to averting, by firm but friendly conciliation, the danger of a renewed Continental holocaust. Were I not confident of this, I should not be a supporter of the present Government.

You call me "*naive*." I welcome this epithet. I am glad that you agree with Mr. Fowler that it is in strict accordance with English Usage to confuse our genders. I find it most rejuvenating to be assured that after twenty years of the Diplomatic Service heaven still lies about me in my infancy. And I hold that cautious credulity is a more constructive state of mind than reckless suspicion. But in this instance I do not think that I am being *naive*. I accord to Mr. Eden my unlimited confidence. If I am mistaken in this, I shall make the only amends that lie within my power.

HAROLD NICOLSON

Sissinghurst Castle,
Kent.

SIR,—Mr. Harold Nicolson has returned to a charge which I have ventured to make against you on several occasions in the past. Let me assure him, through your columns, that he had better give it up at once. Three years ago you tried hard to get us to make war on Japan without a fleet. All this summer you did your best to hound us into war with Italy, protesting at the same time that our existing (and obsolete) armed forces were exorbitant and unnecessary. Next year, no doubt, you will ask us to fight Germany without an Air Force.

The fact that no one in this country agrees with you—not even Mr. Lansbury or Mr. Clive Bell—does not deter you for a moment. "There are already plenty of League armaments," you say. In other words, "Let us be righteous, noble, hypocritical, and economical; and let us leave the dirty work to France and Russia." This argument might have appealed to Liberal Nonconformity at the close of the last century; but it appeals to no one to-day.

I realise that no appeal to common sense from Mr. Nicolson, however cogent, can deflect you. But it is a pity. And perhaps the most irritating aspect of the whole matter is that the consistent lunacy of your attitude towards foreign affairs must detract, to some extent, from the value of your admirable articles on almost every other subject.

ROBERT BOOTHBY

17 Pall Mall,
London, S.W.1.

[The contrast between Mr. Nicolson and Mr. Boothby is interesting. Mr. Nicolson understands that re-armament is absurd except in relation to policy. He differs merely because he thinks that the Government does intend to turn over a new leaf and support a genuinely League policy. The point passes right over Mr. Boothby's head. We do not believe that Mr. Boothby can seriously hold that the reason why we (or rather Sir John Simon) turned down America's offer of co-operation in the case of Japan or why we have refused seriously to apply sanctions in the case of Italy was any lack of arms. As for the future, Great Britain has not defined her policy and we are by no means convinced from the utterances of prominent persons in Mr. Boothby's party that the re-armament suggestions are even intended for the conversion of the possible future aggressor. There is more to be said for an isolation policy than for one that is half in and half out of the League. If after proper consultation with other League powers and a clear definition of British commitments on behalf of the League it was agreed that the British quota would at present be inadequate, we should not object to re-armament. What we complain of is re-armament for an unspecified policy.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MONARCHY

SIR,—The letters of your correspondents, Mr. Tatlock and Mr. Barrow, are most timely. Like them, and like many other citizens, I was glad that the late King achieved his Jubilee and sorry that he died, and I value the monarchy on account of its position in the Constitution. But loyalty such as mine has to-day become almost treason, although it has behind it a national tradition of nearly three hundred years. No one is considered loyal now unless he is hysterical, and the hysteria is of the particularly depressing type associated with "below stairs." There is an attempt, both in the press and in the B.B.C., to transform our country into a sort of vast Servants' Hall, and to present our King as an absolute monarch, subject to death but in other ways divine, who governs us from up above with the help of his army and navy.

This pernicious and unconstitutional nonsense has gone to great lengths, and now is the moment to protest against it. For next year we shall be faced with yet another pageant—the Coronation. The newspapers will be out to make money from the Coronation, and they must be left to make it, but the B.B.C. stands in a different position. It is financially independent and it has a responsibility. It ought to be approached in good time by people of weight who would urge it to display the brevity and the balance which were so lamentably absent from its treatment of the Jubilee and the Funeral, and who would point out to it, in suitable terms, that orgies of flunkeyism are bad for the national health.

A straw shows which way the wind blows, and I will end by holding one up. Not long ago the announcer informed me, with suitable gravity, that the present King had won a fourth prize at a horse show. He did not say who got the first prize. It would have been of no interest to the Servants' Hall.

Reform Club, S.W. E. M. FORSTER

SIR,—In his letter on "The Psychology of Monarchy," published in your last issue, Mr. Harrison Barrow raises an interesting point. He says that the proceedings showed two facts "disturbing to all true democrats." One of these facts was, he says, "the ease with which the inhabitants of this country can be swept back into the middle ages of belief despite the education of our schools." Would it not have been more correct for Mr. Barrow to have said "*because* of the education of our schools"? In my experience, the schools do more than any other single instrument to inculcate deep respect for the monarchy, the Empire and the Union Jack. That is perfectly natural, because orthodox education is actually a powerful tool of government. The consequence is that those who advocate a new social order find themselves up against the ideas and sympathies which have been inculcated in the minds of the young by the educational system.

J. P. M. MILLAR,
General Secretary

National Council of Labour Colleges,
15 South Hill Park Gardens,
Hampstead, London, N.W.3.

WHERE IS HUGENBERG?

SIR,—You remember perhaps that Herr Hitler's first Cabinet was formed in coalition with the Conservative (*Deutschnationale*, German National) party which, under the leadership of Herr Alfred Hugenberg, had done nearly more for the Nazis' coming to power than they themselves did. Herr Hugenberg became a Minister in Herr Hitler's Government, but retired from it after a time and disappeared, in deep disgust, from politics when he began to see what a gang he had been instrumental in helping into the Wilhelmstrasse. To keep up the semblance of a coalition Herr Hugenberg was, much against his wishes, as one heard at the time, nominated a member of the Reichstag when that farcical parliament was re-formed according to the orders of the Führer, and Herr Hugenberg became the only M.P. in Nazi Germany who was not a member of the Nazi party (THE party, as it is called in German legislation—quite rightly, as it has a monopoly of existence).

When last autumn, at Nuremberg, the last t's were crossed in official anti-Semitism, these laws were introduced in the Reichstag and passed within a few minutes. The meeting was broadcast by all German wireless stations, but the broadcasting was suddenly interrupted, after the first few words of the Reichstag president, Herr Göring. The reason has remained unknown to the public

for a long time. I hear now from an excellent source that the reason was that after the speech of the Führer, Herr Hugenberg rose and tried to discuss these laws, for the purpose of lodging his protest against this new and incredible piece of barbarism. He was immediately and literally beaten down, in the midst of a great uproar, by his colleagues in Parliament, and the wireless was switched off. Nothing has been heard of his fate since that day.

There are still some people left in this country who compare the present German Reichstag quite seriously to other parliaments. The fate of Herr Hugenberg, who once dared to try to open his mouth in the Nazis' Reichstag, may enlighten some people here, and that is why I believe that you would add one item more to the long list of your services to the German nation if you would see your way to publish this letter. JOSEPH WALDMANN

Hampstead, N.W.3.

EXISTENCE

SIR,—Forced to exist on 4*s.* weekly for food in one room without fires or cooking facilities here is a typical week's expenditure. I drink water only.

	s.	*d.*
2 Wholemeal loaves		7½
3 Tins Sardines		9
4 Tins Salmon	1	0
4 Punnets Mustard and Cress ..		8
1½ lb. Margarine		7½
½ lb. Cheese		3½
	3	11½

Can any reader kindly suggest a better choice? I am 63.

30 Union Street, Maidstone. A. E. MINTON

ABORTION FIGURES

SIR,—We, the undersigned, believing illegal abortion to be one of the most serious factors contributing to the continued high maternal mortality rate, wish to be allowed to comment on the discussion which took place last week, when representatives from the National Council of Women were received by Sir Kingsley Wood, Minister of Health.

We welcome the motives which prompted the deputation to request "that future official returns should show deaths attributable to abortion separately from the general figures on maternal mortality." We feel constrained, however, to point out that the induction of abortion, whether by the woman herself or others, is an indictable offence, punishable under the present law by penal servitude. It is, therefore, highly improbable that women will risk such indictment by voluntary confession until the law itself is altered. No final deduction can be made from statistics collected under the shadow of imprisonment.

JANET CHANCE
STELLA BROWN
BERTHA LORISGNOL
ALICE JENKINS
E. F. HITCHCOCK
FRIDA LASKI

Kitelands, Micheldever, Hants.

SALUTE AFTER SNEEZING

SIR,—We must delve deeper into the past than Y. Y.'s article suggested for the origin of salutations after sneezing, for this custom is much older than Greek or Roman, or the kings of Mesopotamia and the kings of Semnaar. It is bound up with the primitive belief in Animism.

Early man very often identified breath with spirit or soul, and believed that, as a man's soul could pass in and out of his body, so the good or evil spirits of the dead for ever hovering around him could enter into a man and bless him or afflict him with disease. These ideas are to be found to-day among the Zulus and many other tribes. Covering the mouth when yawning has its origin, not in politeness, but in an attempt to prevent the entrance of evil spirits.

Saluting a sneeze has a similar origin. A sneeze exorcised the evil spirit and was therefore a sign that a sick person would be restored to health. Hence the custom of giving thanks after a sneeze, still to be seen in the Moslem's exclamation, "Praise to Allah." Sneezing was also a sign that the ancestral spirit had entered into a man and this was a cause for congratulation from those around him. Zulu diviners are very apt to sneeze and this is regarded as an indication of the presence of the spirits. This idea is found among many primitive peoples in widely separated parts of the world. If a Samoan sneezes the bystanders say, "Life to you"; the natives of Florida say, "The Sun guard thee"; while the negroes of Old Calabar will exclaim, "Far from you," with an appropriate gesture as if throwing off some evil. Celtic folklore has a group of stories turning on the superstition that anyone who sneezes is liable to be carried off by the fairies unless their power is warded off by a "God bless you."

The modern invocation is, therefore, a very ancient survival, and who shall say whether it is not as good a way of tackling the demon of colds and influenza—which in these scientific days we call germs—as to wear a locket round one's neck, which also dates back to prehistoric times? M. BOUTFLOWER

14 Hobart Place,
Westminster, S.W.1.

THE AMERICAN INDIAN

SIR,—In your last issue Critic makes the following statement in speaking of the Canadians: ". . . a mixture of Indian blood is socially regarded as a great asset." I do not know how the people of the United States regard this matter, but as I am a Canadian and have lived for fifty years among the Canadians of Eastern Canada, I am in a position to state that Critic's observation is entirely erroneous with regard to the attitude of the Canadian people on this subject. You can offer no greater insult to a Canadian than to suggest that there is Indian blood in his veins. The quotation from the Indian, Mr. Grey Owl, also gives an entirely false impression—to begin with, the privilege of getting into the Canadian "Who's Who" is a financial rather than a social matter. CANADIAN

BRYN MAWR SUMMER SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

SIR,—For a number of years a joint committee of Bryn Mawr (U.S.A.) graduates and representatives of American industrial workers has run an eight weeks' summer school in Bryn Mawr College "to offer young women in industry opportunities to study liberal subjects and to train themselves in clear thinking; to stimulate an active and continued interest in the problems of our economic order; and to develop a desire for study as a means of understanding and of enjoyment of life."

The American Committee has most generously offered two full scholarships annually to British industrial workers, and a small committee of educationists and Trade Unionists in this country has made itself responsible for the selection of students and for the provision of their travelling and out-of-pocket expenses.

Hitherto the necessary funds have been collected by private subscription, but unless an additional £100 can be raised this spring the Committee will be obliged to refuse one of the scholarships. This it is very reluctant to do, as they have proved of immense benefit to the scholars and are a valuable contribution to international friendship. To meet this situation Lady Sanderson is kindly organising, at her house, 8 Sloane Gardens, S.W.1, a sale of useful goods and provisions, which Mrs. C. R. Attlee has consented to open on Friday, February 28th, at 3 p.m. The Committee hopes that your readers will appreciate the value of the work which it is doing and support it by coming to the sale, or by sending a donation or subscription, however small, to the Honorary Treasurer, Mrs. H. Clements, 60 Warwick Gardens, London, W.1. VERA ANSTEY,
Chairman.

REWARDS FOR GOOD DRIVERS

SIR,—With reference to Mrs. Margaret I. Cole's letter on the subject of "Rewards for Good Drivers," I wish to say that a scheme such as that envisaged by her has been in operation here for some time past.

The Vienna Automobile Club, on application by drivers who have driven for 5, 10, 15, 20 or 25 years respectively, without incurring a fine or being involved in an accident, issue a diploma and a very handsomely executed enamel car badge with big figure "5," "10," etc., as the case may be, "without fine or accident." To obtain one of these badges (for which only cost price is charged) it is not necessary to be a member of the particular motoring association, but proof has to be submitted in the shape of a clear police record and a declaration from the insurance company covering the entire period. Apart from its ornamental value,

the badge has the tangible advantage that traffic policemen, being only human, are inclined to treat holders of an unblemished record somewhat more lightly than they would the undistinguished multitude. OSCAR SINGER

Wien, XVIII, Bastiengasse 81,
Austria.

ANOTHER ORIGIN OF THE SAME JOKE

SIR,—It is not clear whether Critic attributes the admirable jest concerning those who lie about Heaven in middle age to his Hindu friend, or whether we are to conclude that his Hindu friend was borrowing without acknowledgment from J. K. Stephen. For in the nineteenth century J. K. Stephen had the credit of it, and the part of the very patronising padre was played by Oscar Browning. A. L. IRVINE

Pageites,
Charterhouse, Godalming.

ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

SIR,—We think you might be interested in the following example of an absurdity resulting from the present tendency of Capitalist states towards Economic Nationalism.

As is the case in many other countries, the South African government keeps the home prices of agricultural products, such as sugar, maize, etc., well above the world prices, and exports the surplus at a much lower figure. As a severe drought over large parts of this country has destroyed all the crops, it is essential that the native population should be able to obtain cheap supplies of maize (mealies), which is their staple food. As, however, this maize would be for human consumption, the Government cannot sell it for less than the fixed internal price, and we therefore see the absurd and tragic situation of maize being sold to feed cattle at 5*s*. 6*d*. per bag, while starving natives must pay 12*s*. per bag for it.

To quote from the *Johannesburg Star* of January 9th :

> The export quota provisions of the Mealie Control Act have presented legal difficulties in providing relief, and these can be removed only by suspending the whole Act, which the Government considers inadvisable.
>
> The Act permits the Government to divert mealies set aside for export to farmers who need it for cattle, but in no other case is the diversion legal.

And at the same time we read of a meeting of farmers in Harrismith, where it is stated that a large number of poor farmers and virtually all the natives are facing starvation. As a crowning absurdity, when South Africa is exporting millions of bags at 5*s*. 6*d*.—

> The Government will be asked to import maize from the Argentine or elsewhere should it not be found possible to buy it in South Africa at 10*s*. a bag.

As we write, however, we hear on our wireless that the long-deferred rains have arrived at last, which means that at least the cattle will be fed free ! PHILIP AND BARBARA SOPER

Johannesburg.

Miscellany

STRAVINSKY AND HINDEMITH

DURING the past fortnight we have had the opportunity of hearing in London two important works, namely, Hindemith's Symphony *Mathis der Maler* and Stravinsky's opera oratorio *Œdipus Rex*. I shall deal with the Stravinsky work first. Stravinsky has composed his work for six vocalists, a male choir, an orchestra and a speaker. The role of the speaker was taken at the B.B.C. performance at the Queen's Hall by Mr. Philip Cunningham and the conductor was M. Ernest Ansermet.

Now M. Ansermet is frequently chosen to conduct Stravinsky's compositions in London, partly no doubt because he is a highly intelligent and cultivated musician, who is in sympathy with Stravinsky and his musical ideals and a personal friend of the composer. It is necessary to mention this as any experienced music lover hearing M. Ansermet conduct Mozart's C major (" Jupiter ") symphony which preceded *Œdipus Rex* at this concert would wonder what M. Ansermet's special qualifications for such a task were, since the impression one would get from his rendering of the Mozart was that of a genteel, refined musician of a—in my opinion—misguided French school, whose ideal of music is that of the salon—a choice and tasteful salon but still nothing more than a salon for the display of dainty bric-a-brac.

Of course, good conventional manners belong by right to the salon and so we may perhaps find a link between M. Ansermet and Stravinsky in the latter's extraordinary theories about himself and his music, in which he is always harping on his desire for the impersonal and conventional. We are told by a M. Arthur Lourié that Stravinsky chose the oratorio form for *Œdipus Rex* because of its conventionality. Perhaps psychologists will not be surprised to learn that impersonal or conventional is the very last thing which Stravinsky's music is. Of all living composers he is one of the least impersonal and his affinity in this respect is with Tchaikovsky rather than with the classics such as Bach, Haydn and Mozart. Stravinsky's desire to achieve the impersonal is undoubtedly genuine, but I believe it is because he is a good and serious enough creative artist to have real ambitions and to be conscious of his special weakness—*which is to be too personal and primarily emotional*. A conductor such as M. Ansermet will make for a lucid and in a sense *musical* rather than a dramatic rendering of Stravinsky's work, and his cool finesse and devitalised tact will take the personal sting out of Stravinsky's music and not expose its naked and fiery utterance too barely.

It was no doubt because of this theory of the conventional and impersonal that M. Ansermet was not disconcerted by, or perhaps was even enthusiastic about, the B.B.C. choice of the speaker, for Mr. Cunningham, apart from his great personal charm, was very near some people's ideal of an announcer, having about six pounds of prunes in his mouth instead of the two or three which is all that the lesser gifted B.B.C. speakers with the anti-Belfast enunciation can stuff into their faces. At Mr. Cunningham's first sentence, half a dozen people around me involuntarily laughed aloud. Poor ignoramuses ! They did not realise that Mr. Cunningham was being more conventional and non-natural than Stravinsky could ever have hoped for in his wildest dreams !

But Mr. Cunningham, probably without knowing it, has provided that little fact which can kill a theory stone-dead since, instead of his conventional utterance sounding right, it sounded completely wrong, utterly out of keeping with Stravinsky's music and fatal to the score's unity of effect. But at this point I must make a reservation. I think that under the terms " conventionality " and " impersonality " Stravinsky is seeking for something entirely different from Mr. Cunningham's style of enunciation. And it is here that one must accuse the B.B.C. of frequently making serious blunders in its choice of readers, either of prose or poetry. I remember once being in the country for a week-end and my host said that somebody was to read Keats's *Ode to the Nightingale* early in the evening. We all decided to hear it, but after the first line there was a unanimous cry to turn it off, the speaking was so appallingly bad. It is extraordinarily hard to speak verse well and correctly, quite as difficult as to sing well and correctly, and unfortunately we have very few actors who can do it. But it is the B.B.C.'s business to find those who can and in this it should seek the advice of the few poets who understand this matter. I say " few " because, unfortunately, many poets are as bad at reading verse as the majority of actors.

I was greatly impressed by *Œdipus Rex*. It seems to me to be one of Stravinsky's very best works. It has great variety of expression as well as uncommon intensity and dramatic powers. Jocasta's aria in the second act is a superb and extraordinarily lively invention. There was something even grand about the aria of Tiresias " Dicere non possum " and the scene with the shepherd and especially the scene in which both the shepherd and the messenger speak were extremely impressive.

I must say that Stravinsky makes all our own composers seem very small beer indeed. It would be very interesting to hear *Œdipus Rex* again and under a different conductor.

Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler* symphony derives from a triptych by a sixteenth century German painter, Matthias Grünewald, and is in three parts (I) Concert of Angels, (II) Entombment, (III) Temptation of St. Anthony. It was superbly performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra at the Courtauld-Sargent concert under a conductor new to London, Fritz Stiedry, a Viennese recently at the Berlin Opera but now, owing to the Nazi anti-Jewish mania, the conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra. It is an ill-wind that blows no good. Stiedry is a loss to Germany but a gain to Russia. Herr Stiedry's performance of Mozart's "Prague" symphony and of Beethoven's C minor at this same concert might be blamed for a tendency to underlining and exaggeration, but against this must be put the superb musicianship and vitality of the performances. I infinitely prefer Stiedry's to Ansermet's Mozart, for Stiedry has that essential grasp of rhythm which Ansermet lacks, and one would have thought from hearing these two performances that it was the Prague symphony which was the great monument of contrapuntal design while the "Jupiter" was an insipid piece of academic writing.

Of Hindemith's symphony I have to say that it is far the most impressive composition of Hindemith's I have heard. The almost meaningless jumpiness of his themes, which is a feature of so much of his work, giving them a machine-made character, is here slightly less evident than usual, and the music seems to develop more in accordance with an inner law of artistic expression than merely from the clever brain of a master-craftsman. Of the three movements, I thought the last was the most successful because the most expressively musical, the richest in invention and the one in which Hindemith's contrapuntal style flowered most naturally with the least dryness. *Mathis der Maler* on a first hearing gave me a singular impression of there being some affinity in Hindemith's talent with that of J. S. Bach. This was chiefly due to the way in which the pictorialness of the subject found a representation, not in the modern style of descriptive music, but much more in Bach's style, while remaining essentially musical.

W. J. TURNER

CAPTAIN SHANDON

READERS of Thackeray will remember the Irish journalist, Captain Shandon, whom young Pendennis goes to see in Fleet Prison, finding him dressed in a tattered dressing-gown, and talking with enthusiasm of the newly founded *Pall Mall Gazette*, which he was to edit, and to which magazine, "written by gentlemen for gentlemen," Pendennis was asked to contribute.

It is well known that the portrait of Captain Shandon was drawn from the brilliant Irish scholar, essayist and poet, William Maginn, who had migrated from Cork to Edinburgh in 1820, where he had been welcomed by Blackwood, in whose magazine he had inaugurated the famous *Noctes Ambrosianae*. In 1823 he had come to London, where he had contributed to the *Quarterly Review* and various other publications. In 1830 he started the famous *Fraser's Magazine*, which published so much of the best work of Hazlitt, Thackeray and Carlyle. Thackeray describes Maginn as one of the best and cleverest and kindest of men, who won the love of everyone who met him, and whose sweetness of nature nothing could disturb. He was endowed with many brilliant gifts—almost with genius—but unfortunately with no genius for moral conduct, being, indeed, entirely devoid of the virtues that make for respectability and success.

This world is in its way a moral world; but it is only moral in spots. On cold, calculating villains it seems to smile, and allows solemn humbugs and oppressors to flourish like bay-trees, while vagabonds and generous prodigals it lashes with unmitigated fury. Its distribution of rewards and punishments would be merely ludicrous, were it not so cruel; and the hallowed preference for the company of publicans and wine-bibbers over that of righteous Pharisees has not affected it in the least.

Certainly poor Dr. Maginn, who trod the primrose path so gaily, by no means deserved the wretched fate allotted to him. The greater part of his life was spent in a debtors' prison, and at the age of forty-nine he died, disreputable, consumptive and prematurely old.

> Barring drink and the girls, I ne'er heard of a sin;
> Many worse, and few better than bright, broken Maginn—

Such was Lockhart's kindly epitaph, when the poor man's body was flung into a nameless grave.

Nor has Posterity made, as it sometimes makes, the slightest effort to repair this injustice. Maginn is now remembered, as far as he is at all remembered, for the disastrous effect of his kindness to another half-comic, half-tragic figure of the time, the once famous spinster-poetess, Letitia Landon, or L. E. L., as she was known to fame. Though no one reads her poems now, her mysterious and dreadful death in West Africa has kept her name alive. She figures also, we cannot but believe, in Thackeray's inimitable portrait of Miss Bunion, the authoress of *Heartstrings*, *The Deadly Nightshade*, *Passion Flowers*, etc., as she makes her appearance at Mrs. Perkins's Ball.

> The sufferings she has had to endure are, she says, beyond compare; the poems which she writes breathe a withering passion, a smouldering despair, an agony of spirit that would melt the soul of a drayman, were he to read them. Well, it is a comfort to see that she can dance of nights, and to know (for the habits of illustrious literary persons are always worth knowing) that she eats a hot mutton chop for breakfast every morning of her blighted existence.
>
> She lives in a boarding-house at Brompton, and comes to the party in a fly.

To this boarding-house in Brompton that most unsuitable person, Dr. Maginn, often came to help her with her outpourings of despair; some of them he even wrote himself; he bargained for her with publishers and puffed her volumes when they appeared. This was all very pleasant, but it was very unwise as well. It got them "talked about," as the expression is; but being conscious of the nature of their friendship, the genial Irishman and the gushing spinster paid no attention to the warnings of their friends. Before long, these friends began to be inundated with anonymous letters full of calumny—letters which no one was able to trace to their source. Were they written by some other poet, envious, as poor Letitia thought, of her great literary success? Or perhaps by the mother of Maginn's four children, made jealous by the report that Letitia had been seen sitting in her husband's lap? Or, as her latest biographer suggests, were these defamatory letters composed by the poetess herself, who, being affected by some queer hysteria, and unconsciously curious to experience in life the woes she had celebrated in song, started this campaign of calumny which caused her engagement to John Forster, the future biographer of Dickens, to be broken off, and drove the foolish, innocent, flirtatious, gushing old maid, whose sales were waning, to marry at last, out of the fear of never being married, a dour Scottish administrator from West Africa, where her career was almost immediately ended by a dose of prussic acid. Whether she killed herself, or was murdered by her husband's discarded negro mistress, no one knows.

Maginn's connection with this story has not been forgotten; but none of his writings are remembered now. Though a brilliant talker who rejoiced greatly in the sound of corks, he was not idle; his collected works would fill as many volumes as those of Trollope; but they must now be sought for in the dusty old volumes of Blackwood or Fraser, or at the most in the small selection from them which was published by R. W. Montagu in 1885, and has long been out of print. Yet they are excellent reading, for Maginn was a sound scholar and possessed an admirable and racy style. His paper on Farmer's *Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare* is full of critical insight;

and in an essay on Lady Macbeth he gives a luminous survey, which I have never seen equalled, of the treatment given to women in the literatures of Greece, of Rome, of Italy and England. He translated Homer in a way that won the praise of Matthew Arnold; and in the writing of stories about Irish adventurers he beat on his own field Thackeray, who owed more to him than has ever been acknowledged. In looking through his amusing essays, I found one of interest to those who try to see things as past generations saw them. We are all familiar with the abhorrence, nausea and contempt felt by Byron and his friends for what he called "the p—a-bed poetry" of Keats, of that "pretentious and ill-bred Cockney poet, that miserable self-polluter of the human mind"; but Maginn, being a sound Tory of the school of Lockhart and Wilson, gives us in a review of *Adonais* the essence of the disgust of another group of good writers for what he calls the "poetico-metaphysical maniac" Shelley, who, with the Godwinian colony of licentious atheists at Pisa, was "playing the Bacchanal beside the Tuscan Sea." With gusto, wit and indignation, he writes of the dreary nonsense of *P. B. Shelley's* lamentations for the death of a *Mr. J. Keats*, "a poor sedentary man of unhealthy aspect, who left a decent calling for the melancholy trade of Cockney-poetry," and who, after writing two or three little books of silly, presumptuous verse, full of servile Cockney slang, had recently died of a consumption caused (so his friends alleged) by what right-minded people regarded as the indisputably just sentence of the *Quarterly Review*.

After a careful examination of *Adonais*, Maginn finds in it only five readable lines; the rest of this "oderiferous, colourific, daisy-enamoured style" being a mere wild waste of words. Maginn writes with honest conviction and total unawareness of the crushing Day-of-Judgment reversal which was fated to make ridiculous himself and his friends before the tribunal of Posterity.

But among Maginn's writings there is one sweet-tempered and infinitely witty book, which ought to make Posterity willing to forgive all his literary and other misdemeanours. In this little volume, which was entitled *The Maxims of Sir Morgan O'Doherty, Bart.*, this kindly tippler has embodied the sparkling essence of his convivial life.

Maginn's maxims, being concerned as they mostly are with eating and drinking and making love, three of the main interests of his life (though shrewd observations on literature and human nature are mingled with them), possess one of the most important merits of this aphoristic way of writing: they are unmistakably his own—no one else could have written them; each coin of thought bears stamped upon it the image of the author from whose mint it issues, as the following sentences show:

Never take lobster-sauce to salmon.

Every popular preacher is a goose.

In order to know what cod really is, you must eat it in Newfoundland.

Ass-milk, they say, tastes exceedingly like woman's. No wonder.

In literature and in love, we generally begin in bad taste.

What is an old roofless cathedral compared to a well-built pie?

No cigar-smoker ever committed suicide.

He whose friendship is worth having, must hate and be hated.

It is singular that scarcely any tailor who can make a coat well, can make pantaloons.

Cold pig's face is one of the best things in the world for breakfast.

Much is to be said in favour of toasted cheese for supper.

Some people tell you you should not drink claret after strawberries. They are wrong.

When a man is drunk, it is no matter upon what he has got drunk.

Claret should always be decanted.

There is no such thing as female genius.

Hock cannot be too much, claret cannot be too little, iced.

Maxims are hard reading, demanding a constant stretch of the intellectual faculties. Every word must be diligently pondered, every assertion examined in all its bearings, pursued with a keen eye to its remotest consequences, rejected with a philosophic calmness, or treasured up with the same feeling as a possession to eternity.

Tap claret tastes best out of pewter pots.

Whenever you see a book frequently advertised, you may be pretty sure it is a bad one. If you see a puff quoted in the advertisement, you may be quite sure.

Never wear a coat with a velvet collar.

We moderns are perhaps inferior to our ancestors in nothing more than in our epitaphs.

The finest of all times for flirting is a wedding. They are all agog, poor things!

Poetry is like claret, one enjoys it only when it is very new, or when it is very old.

People may talk as they like, but after all, London is London.

If a woman has had more than three husbands, she poisons them; avoid her.

The best of all pies is a grouse-pie.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Various Heavens," at The Gate Theatre

It is a relief to go to an intelligent play these days. And in this piece both dialogue and characterisation are much above the average. The choice between her lover, her work and her religion is not one that is apt to worry most lady novelists and it is perhaps for that reason that the interest seems a little tenuous. Nor, when it came to the point of the discussion on the merits of that particular heaven, did the *advocatus diaboli* in the person of Mr. Meldreth (Mr. Hedley Briggs) put up a very good fight against the Catholic Church. The scene between the lovers touched the high-water mark of the piece and both Miss Beatrix Lehmann and Mr. Eric Berry gave performances of great emotional delicacy. Miss Lehmann, who gives a certain elusive quality to everything she touches, drew her portrait with irreproachable technique. The trick of putting the second act a year before the period of the first and third, which are continuous, did not seem worth the trouble it caused. In a short episodic piece like Mr. Coward's *Shadow Play* it has its effect, but in a three-act play seems hardly to carry its weight.

"Children to Bless You," at the "Q" Theatre

This rather ordinary little comedy is worth, by its freshness of treatment and amusing lines, three of any of the plays produced in the last month. Its ingredients are based, as the recipes say, on a pint of stock. The upper middle-class doting mother, the young things too bright for their environment, the despised aunt who turns out to be the fairy bountiful, the extravagant son who embezzles his firm's funds, are all here. But Miss Donisthorpe brings them to life, and what is more to the point, to stage life, by a series of well-turned situations and an observation of atmosphere. She owes a good deal to her cast. The children were all good, especially Mr. Nigel Patrick, who has a charming personality and only needs a whip cracked over him now and again to assure him a steady livelihood in the West End, while Miss Mary Jerrold, competent as ever, gathers her chickens under her wing with a "Silver Cord"-ish cluck of enjoyment. The play stands or falls by the prodigal aunt from *le monde où l'on s'ennuie*. Miss Irene Browne, who has been absent from the West End far too long, brings to the part all the distinction of movement and delivery which are so characteristically her own. A little staccato at her first entrance—and here the construction of the play is somewhat weak, for the mislaid telegram should be read and deplored—she moves brilliantly through the lives of her relations, witty, sympathetic, amorous, and when Miss Mary Jerrold decides she cannot after all go off on the long holiday her sister has decreed for her, moves out of their lives with just the right air of having made her effort, but not dreaming of allowing anything to interfere with her serene passage through the world. Her episode with the supposed piano-tuner is one of the most amusing and well-written scenes in the play, but here Mr. Kim Peacock, the only weak spot in the cast, threw away his chances. This piece only needs a little pruning—the vitriol accident to Martin could with more probability be turned into a broken wrist or ankle—a little more direction and some minor alterations in the company to ensure a three months' run in the West End.

"Storm in a Teacup"

Mr. Bridie's adaptation of Mr. Bruno Frank's play, which was recently performed at the Royalty and was transferred to the Haymarket on February 19th, suffers a little from the loss of atmosphere attendant on the transference from the small-town German Junkerism of Mr. Frank's original to the more petty airs of provincial Scotland. Once the play gets going, the misfortunes of the poor Irishwoman's dog, admirably played by a charming mongrel from Battersea, provide

plenty of amusement and the scenes of election propaganda are shrewdly observed. Mr. Ian MacLean, as the candidate whose downfall is encompassed by his harsh treatment of Patsy, gave a first-rate performance, and Miss Sara Allgood, as Mrs. Flanagan, brought all her rich store of experience to a fat little part, but in the romantic episodes Mr. Bridie's touch fails him. Miss Ivy der Voeux took a good deal of trouble as the candidate's wife, who falls in love with the cub reporter, but Mr. Roger Livesey took almost none as the reporter with the heart of gold and perhaps one should hardly blame him. While the court-scenes were fairly amusing, Mr. Bridie's idea of the behaviour of judges to counsel is somewhat horrifying, even allowing for Gilbertian licence. It is the decoration which counts in this play and fortunately there is enough to make some very pleasant moments in an uneven entertainment.

"Hohe Schule" at the Academy

It seems that no two film-critics or cinema-columnists can agree on any single aspect of the Chaplin film—except that, of course, it *is* badly put together, or has been badly torn apart by the Hollywood censor: everyone can see that—so, after all this wrangling and squinting, it's fine to get back to a picture over which there can be no dispute or doubt. With *Hohe Schule* we are back in Vienna (that city so gay), where in films they are always so deeply concerned with their honour and every shot has four bituminous corners like a tell-tale Royal Academy canvas in the days before Impressionism. If Milestone was the Monet of his profession, Chaplin in *Modern Times* is the Douanier Rousseau and *Hohe Schule* is a Dame Laura Knight. It's a film which deals quite seriously and decoratively with an *haute école* rider who appears, masked, on the music-halls, because he killed his best friend in a duel and was cashiered from the army. As the friend's sister falls in love with him, we grow more curious about the reason for the duel. This interest is neatly exploited; the film is enabled to proceed, pleasantly enough, while the answer is withheld; and it's convincing when it comes. Erich Engel's direction is, in fact, sufficiently astute; but there is little for Rudolf Forster and Angela Salloker to do except become involved and keep a stiff upper lip. They had better parts in *Träumende Mund* and *Das Mädchen Johanna*, respectively. Meanwhile Forster's servant runs away with the picture, because (unless he really was Lionel Barrymore) he represents an authentic Old Vienna—on the *schnitzel* side—as opposed to the customary oceans of champagne and sips of sweet liqueur. An excellent actor.

André Masson at Messrs. Wildenstein's

Everyone interested in contemporary painting should make an effort to see this exhibition, the first which M. Masson has had in London. His decor for the ballet *Présages* aroused great admiration, and great dislike: he is indeed one of the few painters under forty interesting enough to excite violent controversy among connoisseurs. There is no doubt of his talents—it is the use to which he puts them that is open to question. The water-colours in his show prove that he can be as charming and elegiac as any painter of his generation. But in the oils another man appears, violently imaginative, ferociously expressive. M. Georges Duthuit writes an eloquent and witty preface to the catalogue, describing the fever, the erotism and the carnage which preoccupy this painter. Insects, magnified to show their cruelty, dance a macabre ballet, skeletons reap in golden plains. Never has any previous civilisation excited such hatred in the artists belonging to it: our younger poets are all satirists, and even the musicians (listen to William Walton or Berg or Prokoviev) are ferocious. M. Masson is sometimes carried by violence into a German expressionism. But he has a remarkable colour-sense, and can make a *matière* of extraordinary richness. (*Don Quixotte*, No. 14, is most beautifully painted.) The best picture in the show is probably the small *Massacre au Soleil*, where the design and colours are perfectly matched. *La Moisson* is also a splendid work. Messrs. Wildenstein deserve our gratitude for their enterprise in introducing to London this unequal, brilliant and alarming artist.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, February 22nd—
- Robert Mayer Concert for Children, Central Hall, Westminster, 11.
- John L. Hodgson on "Engineering and Dictatorship," 46 Frith Street, 3.
- League of Arts Choir, Victoria and Albert Museum, 3.

SUNDAY, February 23rd—
- W. B. Curry on "Science and Human Welfare," Conway Hall, 11.
- London Film Institute Society, Miss Lotte Reiniger on "Silhouette and Trick Films," Forum Cinema, Villiers Street, 3.
- G. P. Gooch on "Christianity and the Modern State," Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, 3.30.
- May Harrison, Charles Lynch and Mark Raphael, Working Men's College, Crowndale Road, 6.30.
- Prof. W. E. Le Gros Clark on "Fore-runners of the Human Species," Marx House, Clerkenwell Green, 7.30.
- W. H. Auden on "The Artist and Society," 123 Lupus Street, 8.

MONDAY, February 24th—
- "The Lady from the Sea," Playhouse (matinee).
- J. E. Meade on "World Conciliation and Its Problems: Economic Re-adjustments," Conway Hall, 8.30.
- "Jane Eyre," Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

TUESDAY, February 25th—
- Rev. Henry Carter on "Christian Pacifism and Imperialism," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
- G. P. Gooch on "The Outlook in Europe," Kensington Town Hall, 5.30.
- The New Schools in Action. T. F. Coade on Bryanston, Blandford, Dorset (with films), Adolph Tuck Hall, Woburn House, Upper Woburn Place, 6.30.
- J. Strachey and K. Polyani on "Fascism the Common Foe," St. Clement's Educational Centre, 445 Liverpool Road, Barnsbury, 8.
- Horowitz, Queen's Hall, 8.30.

WEDNESDAY, February 26th—
- Royal Choral Society. "St. Matthew Passion," Albert Hall, 8.
- Research Student's Meeting. Alan F. Wells on "Social Surveys and Sociology," Le Play House, 35 Gordon Square, 8.15.
- "Pride and Prejudice," St. James's Theatre.
- "Promise," Shaftesbury Theatre.

THURSDAY, February 27th—
- Royal Philharmonic Society, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, Queen's Hall, 8.15.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THERE are few things more flattering than to find a strange pussy-cat upon the step waiting impatiently for the door to be opened so that he may march in and take possession of the house. Tail in air, he inspects the dining-room, the drawing-room, the library and there he settles himself before the glowing coal-fire, washes his face to show that he is at home, and rewards us with a purr. Wondering whether you should butter his paws (he cannot begin roaming about again until he has licked them clean)—you fetch him a saucer of warm milk. England is a house that has been often honoured with cats from the other side of the Atlantic and its inmates would hardly feel at home without their flattering friendly purrs. Unsure of ourselves, bored by one another, we are usually ready to measure our felicity by the cat's appreciation. "We must be nice people," comes the consoling thought when we feel nastiest, "for at any rate Puss loves our company." And there is no doubt that the transatlantic Pussies do appreciate our sun-warmed brick walls, our flower-gardens, and the quiet old-world peaceful civilisation in which they can sit undisturbed. Tib-cat with the most sonorous of purrs, most subtle of tow-teasers, a giant among his kind, yea a veritable Puss in Boots, was Henry James, whose memory is ever with us. But there are other distinguished members of the feline tribe—as Mr. Logan Pearsall-Smith; his purr is harsher, his claws are sharper and his miaow is heard not seldom. And though full of a kitten's innocence and pretty ways, Mr. James Whitall has obviously the same tabby markings and the same powers of scratching as his cousin.

* * *

In *English Years* (Cape, 12*s.* 6*d.*) Mr. Whitall tells how, accompanied by his wife and an artist friend, George Plank, who has decorated his book, he left his native Philadelphia in order to steep himself in "old-world culture," to get to know Mr. George Moore and to learn how to write. They arrived the year before the war and spent ten years or so in England, and the book gives an amusing picture of how a young couple, first breathlessly, and, it must be said, snobbishly, desirous of meeting the great, grew slowly more critical of them. By "snobbish" I mean only that they cared more for the immense prestige of such institutions as Ellen Terry (their next-door neighbour in the King's Road), George Moore, Steer and the Savile Club, than they did for the realities on which such reputations were founded. Perhaps the trouble was that they were so sensitive that they could feel the roseleaf under any number of mattresses, and in Chelsea there were many roseleaves. Ellen Terry was not above sending a peremptory message to neighbours, just moving in, that the builders must stop hammering while she was resting, or of snooping a scuttleful of coals at a time when these were rationed. And George Moore! How they worshipped and how they hated him! For G. M. was not a cat but a dog, always ready for a dogfight at the dinner-table, and the immense awe with which they approached him was soon transformed into a comic social anxiety lest he should do, or say, something outrageous. G. M. must have found it tempting and he was not good at resisting temptations. The portrait of Moore is an exact superficial description, but Mr. Whitall never seems to have felt his awe and irritation transformed into tenderness—into the desire to protect an artist who was as unmerciful to himself as he was to his friends and who spent more than half of his time trying to disentangle the great artist and the goose. For this reason Mr. Whitall's portrait entirely lacks the deep understanding shown in Mr. Morgan's recent book. For many months Mr. Whitall was engaged in writing a novel at Moore's suggestion and subject to his criticisms, a novel that was to be the life-story of the heroine of *Euphorion in Texas*: an enterprise surpassing any of Max Beerbohm's conceptions.

Moore, though for long the dominating figure on the horizon, was by no means the only important one. Mr. Whitall met Henry James, Conrad and Arnold Bennett, but he missed Shaw:

> There were several other serious gaps in my experience which a true collector would have filled at whatever the cost: Hardy and Wells I never saw, nor Robert Bridges, whose rare visits to the Terrace Logan kept inviolate, and I saw Galsworthy only once, under acutely embarrassing circumstances.

Mr. Whitall was always aware of the disturbing roseleaf; embarrassing as meeting a great Englishman might be, the prospect of two Englishmen meeting each other was almost more than he could bear. Anything might happen! With holy dread he set off to a luncheon where the hostess's "*temerity had carried her past all reasonable limits*," for she had actually invited Lytton Strachey and Mrs. Patrick Campbell! but "*though our hostess had done a risky thing in asking two celebrities to lunch, particularly these two, I could not help admiring her courage now that all was well.*" One feels that, for such an occasion, smelling salts ought to have been provided in the cruets. Mr. Whitall's agonised sensibility is, I think, an illustration that, as Mr. Van Wyck Brooks has pointed out, the guardians of American culture have always been the spinster aunts of the nation. Englishmen are prepared to face Dr. Johnson and to be amused by him even when he is in a bearish mood. When we meet a lion, or a Bottom, we do not want to hear the gurglings of a sucking dove, but to hear him roar, or bray, with his natural organs.

* * *

Mr. Whitall's sensibility had, however, definite limits. During the first four years of his stay England was at war, but he did not remark that its inhabitants were in an unpleasantly overwrought condition. He did, of course, notice its effect upon Henry James. There are passing references to uniforms, smokes for soldiers, charity matinees and growing vegetables, but no notice is taken of the general frame of mind of the English people and I cannot believe that this silence is due purely to Mr. Whitall's politeness. When it was over he does comment:

> In spite of the difficulties of peace-making, people's spirits had risen and there was a new courage in the air with which the appalling sequel to Henry James's tremendous public matter could surely be dealt with.

Perhaps I ought to explain that "*Henry James's tremendous public matter*" was the war; some readers might miss it under this label. But surely the sentence I have quoted is one of the most remarkable understatements that have ever been printed? Set upon steeping himself in old-world culture, Mr. Whitall resolutely ignored that the Old World was lying in a puddle of blood. Somehow or other, the most terrific experience which involved the whole of his generation in agonies of spirit—agonies which have perhaps been best expressed by Siegfried Sassoon—was brushed away as a minor inconvenience. Yet Whitall was a friend of Richard Aldington's and of Osbert Sitwell's. This selfish inhuman detachment is, after all, what we expect from a pussy-cat and it is Mr. Whitall's cat-like qualities which are most charming. His purr is a rich flattery, his subtle humour makes one forgive the cruel little dig of the claws which accompanies it. The coal-fires, the saucers of cream, the armchair within the sacred precincts of the Savile Club (being elected to which was the greatest emotional experience of his life), the succession of rose gardens which he planted in the series of farmhouses which he restored and improved, opening up a Tudor fireplace in one, building a period staircase and adding a paved terrace to another, these are the things which one feels meant the most to him, these are those which he describes best. From being a literary dilettante, ready to act on any suggestion, Mr. Whitall came to play a larger part. From unpaid assistant to J. C. Squire on the *London Mercury*, he became sub-editor, and this was exchanged for the job of reader to Messrs. Heinemann. The work suited him perfectly, but the birth of a son, and the increasing age of his father, drew him back to Philadelphia. One should butter their paws.

DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

Sixth of June. By STANLEY HOPKINS. *Cape.* 7s. 6d.
Show Down. By M. ESCOTT. *Chatto and Windus.* 7s. 6d.
Men in May. By LESLIE PAUL. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
Bones of Contention. By FRANK O'CONNOR. *Macmillan.* 7s. 6d.
Blow and Clee. By F. O. MANN. *Faber and Faber.* 7s. 6d.
Begin Again. By URSULA ORANGE. *Hamish Hamilton.* 7s. 6d.

For more than two years, ever since the appearance of *The Ladies*, I have been looking forward to a new novel by Stanley Hopkins. Miss Hopkins's first novel was that very rare thing—a book that the reviewer is positively reluctant to put down. Though written (as I have subsequently learned) by a woman, it is absolutely innocent of the kind of feminine over-crowding with which so many women writers are inclined to spoil the effect of their best work; and, though it unfolds a long and elaborate story, there are certain incidents and certain characters that I have never quite been able to forget. Captain Flood, splendid, idiotic old patriarch—" vacant and noble, like an old dog, an old horse, an old statesman "—still stalks across the background of my imagination. Or I remember the ludicrous table-turning scene, when the table under Gran'ma's guidance goes waltzing off the porch and along the moonlit garden-path: to finish up in the wood, where Matty, the simple-minded member of the family, has a violent fit of hysterics.

It is sad, then, to have to record that Miss Hopkins's second novel, *Sixth of June*, is considerably less impressive. Miss Hopkins has raised our hopes much too high. Coming from another novelist, it would have seemed an interesting—perhaps a memorable—piece of work; but, as it comes from the author of *The Ladies*, we cannot help comparing it—and comparing it rather unfavourably—with its distinguished and fascinating predecessor. In *Sixth of June*, nothing really happens. Having gone so far, I may as well admit that I prefer novels that, besides possessing a sense of life, also convey a sense of movement—books in which the situation on the last page is materially different from the situation to which we are introduced in the opening chapters; and of this change Miss Hopkins never persuades us. Her *dramatis personae* remain as curiously unfocused on page 252 as on page 10. True, Louis Raphael has formed some kind of satisfying if shadowy resolution. But as for the others—they are still in mid-air; and I suspect that Miss Hopkins may have begun her story not knowing exactly how it would end, and have finished it off, somewhat abruptly, because she realised that from the difficulties, psychological and spiritual, in which her characters were now involved there was no possible issue.

Sixth of June, as its title indicates, is the history of a single day. The Raphaels are Jews—not orthodox but sufficiently true to their race to retain a very strong family feeling. Arnold is being married, and mother and father and his two brothers—even the disillusioned expatriate, Louis—gather around. Harry already lives in the small Virginian township where the ceremony is to take place. Louis and old Mrs. Raphael come from New York. And, character by character, Miss Hopkins analyses their motives, temperament, education, including in her study Margaret, Harry's cold, discontented, over-sensitive wife, their daughter, Elizabeth, and Philip Haxall, the Englishman, whom Harry—partly for snobbish reasons—feels obliged to entertain at his house on the eve of the marriage. Haxall is one of Miss Hopkins's most ambitious but, as it turns out, least successful portraits. Novelists should beware of introducing foreign characters unless they have the appropriate jargon at their finger-tips; and, though Haxall is easily identified as a type—the *déclassé* English swell, whose luck has proved so bad, and whose club or regiment so unkind, that he is reduced to the company of his social inferiors—he has an unfortunate aptitude for using the wrong word. His conversational idiom doesn't ring true. No Englishman of the Haxall sort is so fluent or so cynically loquacious. Incidentally—assuming, as we are asked to assume, that Haxall was an exceptionally polished amorist and generally accomplished *homme du monde*—he would scarcely have pointed out a young woman near Raphael's front door as " a nice bit," only to discover, when it was too late, that she was his host's daughter.

Still, allowing for various fundamental drawbacks, *Sixth of June* is a book well worth reading. Miss Hopkins shows unusual sensitiveness both in her choice of words and in her delineation of character; and, although her personages remain stationary and fail to resolve themselves into any arresting or significant

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pattern, every figure emerges in clear-cut outline. Perhaps the novel is best read as a succession of studies. Here, for instance, is Arnold, the bridegroom, a successful doctor preparing for a marriage that promises him safety and happiness, yet pursued by the tormenting image of an exquisite but unfaithful first wife. The portraits of Louis and Harry are equally vivid—Harry, vulgar, a little uneasy, desperately anxious to be accepted at his own valuation; Louis, the dilettante author; while the family group is completed by Mrs. Raphael, a solid, sensual old woman, who puzzles over her sons and the odd unsatisfactory women they choose to marry, but does not allow their domestic problems to ruffle her magnificent *sang-froid*.

Through the whole book sounds a note of social restlessness. Miss Hopkins is very far from being a political novelist; but she cannot escape the implications of the scene she is describing, and, again and again, she recurs to a familiar burden. Margaret herself, occupied with the cares of a large and prosperous household, feels that the comfortable and placid existence to which she is accustomed will not last for ever:

> She was afraid . . . of what she did not know. . . . But it seemed to her that the thing most fraught with danger was not hunger or homelessness or revolt, but this thoughtless, comfortable, uncomprehending life of theirs, which, because it could never be changed, even by their wish, without smashing the world to bits, was a threat hanging over them all. And in her "all" she included those who led this existence, and those outside it to whom its blindness and complacency were a challenge that must some day be taken up. They would all be victims in the destruction brought about by a system's terrible powerlessness to reckon with or survive a changing world.

In *The Ladies*, Miss Hopkins has described the decline and disintegration of the old South; in *Sixth of June*, she seems to foreshadow the collapse of a civilisation far more recent and, until a few years ago, far more strongly founded.

Considered from a literary point of view, Mr. Escott's novel deserves to stand just below Miss Hopkins's. It is much cruder but, at the same time, it is much more forceful; and, whereas Miss Hopkins appears now and then to lose her way in a labyrinth of conflicting intentions, Mr. Escott's goal is obvious and soon achieved. *Show Down* is a study of passion and jealousy. Quite by chance, the narrator, who has been farming in New Zealand ever since the War, meets and marries a young Englishwoman who reaches the Antipodes on the track of a scapegrace brother. Their marriage is very happy—too happy to last. While his wife is absent, David tumbles into a love-affair with a local girl; and, when she returns, Anna retaliates by starting a love-affair with a particularly unpleasant Englishman who owns property in the neighbourhood. To begin with, it is understood that these little adventures are mere *passades*—that nothing can interrupt the deep devotion that unites David and Anna. But gradually wounded feelings show signs of prevailing over common sense; David becomes furiously and miserably jealous; Anna grows obstinate; and, in the closing chapter, she leaves him and returns home.

Though written with a rather throaty abruptness that would appear to be derived from such American novels as *The Postman Alway Rings Twice*, and with that peculiar mixture of brutality and sentimentality which we owe to *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms*, *Show Down* is an oddly effective book. If New Zealand has many novelists as vigorous as Mr. Escott, I hope that we shall soon have an opportunity of reading their stories; for *Show Down* displays a directness and plainness of treatment in which modern English fiction—even the most accomplished—is very often sadly lacking. Take, for example, the somewhat confused and old-fashioned method of *Men in May*. A novel about the General Strike, written from the standpoint of an extreme Socialist, might seem to offer ample literary scope; yet, apart from the excitement of its subject-matter, the result is as tepid and almost as tedious as a book dealing with the election of a borough council in some small provincial town. The fictitious characters who occupy the foreground are remarkably wooden. Not one of them is the stuff of which revolutions are made. But perhaps Mr. Paul is attempting, by devious and subtle means, to explain why the General Strike passed off so innocently? The wicked copper's nark, who is double-crossed by the police and commits suicide towards the end of the narrative, fails to arouse the slightest shudder, either of sympathy or of reprobation.

But if Englishmen are inclined to get mixed up between the National Anthem and the Red Flag, and sometimes (as I am told happened on Hampstead Heath during the General Strike) will flourish the latter while they sing the former, the Irish, like the French, are more simple-minded and unequivocal in their hatreds. *Bones of Contention* by Mr. Frank O'Connor is an entertaining volume of Irish short stories. You need not be very fond of the Irish, nor take very kindly to Irish *patois*, to enjoy tales as dexterous and good-humoured as "The English Soldier," which relates how the daughter of a devout Fenian is obliged to entertain a British private to tea, or the other eleven stories of this agreeable book. In fact, you may detest Irish humour. For Mr. O'Connor avoids its most irritating characteristics.

Lastly, two novels that did not please the reviewer but may please his readers. *Blow and Clee* is a product of the new sentimentality, which ordains that we should be as romantic in our attitude towards commonplace lechery as our ancestors towards conventional feminine chastity. Clee has gipsy blood. Need one say more? As an amorist, she belongs to the famous and (I suspect) slightly disingenuous "It-doesn't-hurt-me-and-it-does-seem-to-give-them-*so*-much-pleasure-poor-dears" school; and, following this line of conduct, she has affairs, light-hearted and casual, with all kinds of men, young and old, plain and pretty; till a bomb from a Zeppelin, which hits the roof of the cottage where she is spending the night with the Herculean market-gardener who was her first and her only "real" love, cuts short what promises to be a useful if not a particularly interesting career. *Begin Again* is a nicer and quieter story. Here we are in the world of eager young women who crave for the freedom, spiritual and emotional, that is implied by a bed-sitting-room in Kensington and a typist's desk in the City. How spirited are their protests when Mother, a rather charming figure of fun—yet so right in the end!—points out the advantages of a comfortable house in the country and the prospect of a respectable, though not very exhilarating, marriage. It is pleasant to discover that all these young ladies are good at heart—only one, as far as I could make out, has actually "gone wrong"—and to see their exciting stories draw to a calm conclusion. *Begin Again* will have a special appeal for middle-aged matrons who pride themselves on possessing a sense of humour.

PETER QUENNELL

PACIFISM IS ENOUGH

The Roots of War. A PAMPHLET ON WAR AND THE SOCIAL ORDER. *Hogarth Press.* 6*d*.

The Faith Called Pacificism. By MAX PLOWMAN. *Dent.* 3*s*. 6*d*.

Both these books achieve in a remarkable degree what they set out to do. The first is a brilliantly compressed review of the differing shades of opinion within the peace movement in this country compiled by members of the Anti-War Committee of the Society of Friends and the No More War Movement. Amongst those who earnestly desire peace and are willing to make some sacrifice of ideals of national prestige in order to secure it there are roughly three main divisions. There is the diplomatic method, which seeks to work through the League of Nations; the absolute pacifist method, which relies on the individual's refusal to fight in a war of any kind; and finally, the revolutionary method, which looks to the overthrow of a system of society driving nations to war. The authors of *The Roots of War* examine these three methods, reject the first as being merely the post-war equivalent of the pre-war balance of power and conclude that a real peace movement may be founded on some unification of the other two. Mr. Max Plowman arrives at a similar conclusion in one of the most inspiring statements of the case for pacifism that has been written. Every page is infused with such fine feeling and terrifying urgency that it can scarcely fail to pierce the crust of the most crusted Tory or sweeten the temper of the most bigoted Marxist. All those who have found the foundations of their faith in the possibility of peace being sapped by each new movement in world affairs, by Germany leaving the League and Russia joining it, by Britain supporting a collective system and Britain betraying it, and, most important of all, by the tireless energy of scientists who daily make all reasoning on the basis of the practical evidence of the last war more and more anachronistic; in short, all those who are becoming increasingly bewildered as to what they should do to be saved, may turn to these books and not be disappointed.

At a time when the League is winning support from the most unexpected quarters, when even the Communist Party is eager to prove that it can roar for peace as gently as any sucking dove, perhaps the most surprising feature of the two books is their hearty suspicion of the Geneva method. The argument in *The Roots of War* follows fairly well-known lines. The League has

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degenerated into an alliance of those states which desire to maintain the *status quo*. It still commands much of the idealism of the peoples of the world and sincere support from the smaller nations, but its policy is dictated by the imperialist ambitions of the big powers. When it was founded it was conceived as a purely political contrivance for dealing with disputes. It can never hope, therefore, to solve fundamental economic problems. Mr. Max Plowman's antagonism to the League is even more deep-rooted and arises from the religious basis of his pacifism. The League is merely a convenient device for deputing the individual's responsibility for war. The achievement of peace demands first a change on the part of the individual and "in the full possession of consciousness he is in the possession of something which inhibits him from murder." But he does not scorn the more political arguments and he argues the case against imperialism in language refreshingly free from jargon.

But the argument that pacifism is not enough has still to be met. "The vindication of liberty of conscience in time of war is not a substitute for the prevention of war itself, nor is it morally the equivalent of a determined organised struggle to defeat the purposes of a war-making government." Both books make a genuine attempt to answer this obvious criticism. Mr. Max Plowman admits that pacifism is in the first instance a personal and even negative matter and he agrees that it provides no ready answer as to how peace may be secured in the face of a Fascist power determined to go to war. But this is really no valid objection. Once we have broken every reasonable condition essential to the continuance of any society of nations, pacifism cannot be expected to provide an easy means of escape just as if these accumulated errors had never been committed. The existence of a warlike temper in Germany is not so much a difficulty for the pacifist to encounter as a vindication of his whole position. We can only expect a change of heart by reversing the whole process, not by tightening the screw. Mr. Plowman claims that the required change must take place first in the individual rather than in his environment. Here the pacifist and the Marxist part company. The pacifist stresses the importance of a spiritual conversion and the use of those weapons which he seeks to destroy in order to gain his ends cannot be justified either in practice or in theory. The Marxist, on the other hand, upholds the use of force because he claims that a drastic change in economic conditions must be the prerequisite of any lasting change in the individual. This is one of the few points on which Mr. Plowman is not as fair as he might be. He is willing to admit that a pacifism that is not ready to contemplate the overthrow of our present system of society is seriously incomplete, but he does not consider very fully how that overthrow may be accomplished. In *The Roots of War* it is also realised that pacifism must be allied with some form of Socialism. The Society of Friends has never subscribed to the view that religion was merely an instrument for calling in the next world to redress the balance of the present. For them a Christianity that was not to be applied to everyday conditions was no Christianity at all. They were the first religious body in this country to recognise that the doctrine of loving one's neighbour really precluded any desire one might have to blow him to pieces with the latest scientific machinery; it seems likely that they may be among the first to condemn on Christian principles a system of society which drives nations to war.

The vital point which, as Mr. Plowman rightly insists, must alter our whole outlook on the problem, is the skilful sharpening of the implements of war made possible by modern science. "The irony of the present situation is that those who think in terms of the bonfire and the pleasures that have been derived from dancing around it, refer to the handling of live wire as if it were much the same thing." Mr. Plowman holds that absolute pacifism provides the only practical policy now that war has become a form of race suicide. He suggests that the Brighton Conference of the Labour Party should have passed the following resolution: "That this Conference, standing for the universal solidarity of labour, pledges the working-classes of this country to decline to take part in war of any kind, and refuses to support sanctions as being coercive measures of economic war brought about by the iniquitous intrigues of nationalist capitalism." It is at least arguable that the passing of such a motion by a representative body of left-wing opinion would make so violent an impact on the country generally that some hope might yet appear in the place of the acute depression which any realistic discussion of the prospects of peace is guaranteed to produce.

MICHAEL FOOT

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Many people believe in a confederation of beggars. *The Beggars' Opera*, *Die Drei Groschen Oper*, *Les Mystères de Londres*, the King of Schnorrers, Conan Doyle's *The Man with the Twisted Lip*—legend is kept alive on stage and in novelette. The householder, as he carefully closes his gate behind him in the morning, may notice chalk-marks on the wall: "Gypsies," he mutters darkly. He has to run the gauntlet of trumpeters, flautists and drummers with dangling caps on the way to the station. His newspaper contains the revelation that match-sellers live in Wimbledon, that the blind enjoy their week-end golf, that such itinerants as are not already well-to-do insinuate themselves into porches and kitchens with the purpose of spying out the land for thieves. At any rate, like Bolsheviks, they are all working together, and no doubt they have their Moscow, their Internationale. It is a fantasy which no breadwinner, with a charity-loving wife and daughters, can resist.

How real the origin of this superstition is has been brought vividly before my mind by Mr. Ronald Fuller's *The Beggars' Brotherhood*. The thrill which now children feel when they hear the lines—

> Hark, hark, the dogges doe bark
> The Beggars are coming to Town

—accompanied perhaps by the vision of an inoffensive tramp eating his lunch in a field, must once have had its terrors. In 1569, according to one computation, the Brotherhood numbered 23,000, and by the end of the century there were 12,000 in London alone. They terrorised whole neighbourhoods, robbing shopkeepers and housewives, and defying the justices.

> Whateer we get by gulls
> of country or of city,
> old flatcaps or young heirs

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or lawyer's clerks so witty;
by sailors newly landed
to put in for fresh waters:
by wandering gander-mooners
or muffled, late night-walkers,
with a hone, a hone, a hone,
no cheaters nor decoys
shall have a share, but alone
the bravest Roaring Boys!

Their approach to a town (many of them were old soldiers) suggested the advance of a hostile army; streets would empty and doors close; yet despite the fears of honest citizens, the Beggar—like the gangster to-day—cut a romantic figure in the popular imagination. He might belong to any one of a number of types, each in its way arresting: the freebooting soldier back from the Netherlands, the "merry" Robin Hood, mad Tom O'Bedlam with his ox-horn and flitch, hooting, gabbling and dancing down a village street, the Dummerer, the Pedlar, the Tinker; and so on through Maunders, Cranks, Nips and Foists down to the Clupperdudgeon, usually a Welshman, who exhibited artificial sores. Among female vagrants there were as many distinctions, including Dells who had preserved their virginity, Doxies who had not; and perhaps the most ingenious role of all—the Glimmering Mort, whose home and husband had been burnt, so that she was left destitute. These persons exacted tribute from a cowed and wondering populace. How exactly the Brotherhood was organised I could not make out from reading Mr. Fuller's book; but it seems that they had a rude discipline, and sometimes collected into large bands. In 1589, Mr. Fuller tells us, five hundred beggars threatened to sack St. Bartholomew Fair; there was a panic, the soldiery were called out, and London was put under martial law. Pamphlets against the marauders were written by Greene and others; and one writer suggested that the only effective means of withstanding them lay with the army. So serious was the menace at times that it produced a situation not unlike civil war.

The Brotherhood had a code and elaborate initiation ceremonies. The procedure at these ceremonies, somewhat resembling the rites of Masons and Buffaloes, was apparently more or less the same all over England.

> Dekker has described how, wandering one day in a green and secret grove by a stream whose "noyse went like a chime of bels, charming the eyes to sleepe," he came upon a little hut. He entered and found himself in the thieves' kitchen, empty except for one old nimble-tongued beldame. She was persuaded to hide him in a loft from which he watched the entrance of the tramps. This was one of their meeting places, where they would gather to share their spoils or plot the next move against their enemy the Law. There was a novice to be enrolled that day among the company. The chief Upright Man took a "Gage of Booze" in a great tankard. After assuring himself that the neophyte was a true rogue, he poured the contents of the tankard over the kneeling man's head, gravely pronouncing the words: "I doe stall thee to be Rogue, by vertue of this soveraigne English liquor, so that henceforth it shall be lawful for thee to *Cant* (that is to say) to be a *Vagabond* and *Beg*. . . ."

The newly elected Rogue then had to recite a long oath of obedience in verse; he was given a nickname, suitable to his appearance, and a copy of the Ten Commandments of Beggars, enjoining him to pilfer, to keep faith with his fellows, and preserve the secrets of the Brotherhood. This ceremony was performed by the Upright Man, Rector Chory or Dimber-Damber—the King of the Beggars. Some of the Kings, says Mr. Fuller, were fantastically rich. He mentions one Solomon who "kept his court at Fox Hall in the time of Henry VIII," and another more recent who, having no legs, used to "rock himself about the streets of London on a kind of carriage, and by thus exhibiting his infirmity was enabled to buy several large houses." How recently this Samuel Horsey lived Mr. Fuller does not explain, but I doubt if he means withir the period of newspapers and newspaper stories.

I have pillaged one chapter of this bizarre and entertaining book. There are thirteen other chapters, covering a period from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the eighteenth century, which tell us most of what is known, I imagine, of the English beggars. In the seventeenth century the Coneycatcher has begun to yield before the Highwayman and the Bodysnatcher. Mr. Fuller obviously relishes the subject and he packs his pages. To anyone who has a love of the gruesome and the picturesque, who can enjoy an anthology of thieves' doggerel, and a narrative touched with *The Arabian Nights*, I recommend this book.

G. W. STONIER

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Creative Society. By JOHN MACMURRAY. *Student Christian Movement.* 5*s.*

The Faith and Modern Science. By REGINALD J. DINGLE. *Burns Oates and Washbourne.* 5*s.*

Several years ago a Spanish woman made a pleasant evening for me saying: "You English are all Rousseauists." It was useless to quote Dr. Johnson at her, worse than useless to fall back on my fresh undergraduate political theory. Secretly then and often since I felt that whatever political theory we may learn or adhere to there is at the bottom of it a shifty emotional weakness and an inadequate analysis behind our political benevolence: both of which are useful in managing practical politics, but dangerous in a crisis; and which are Rousseauism enough. Much of the present pacifism in England is of this kind, a benevolent mushroom. For this reason it is disastrous that Mr. Heard's new book should have been greeted and advertised as if it were primarily a pacifist pamphlet. Such pacifism is for him as pregnant an enemy as a nation in gasmasks. There is no *advocacy* of pacifism in his book; peace would follow as a necessary concomitant of his society "like the bloom on the cheek of a youth"; to make it an end sought for its own sake destroys the very purpose.

The book is the most interesting essay in political and historical analysis that has been published in England in my reading life: and writing now in isolation on a long sea-voyage—where perspectives may go wrong—I see it as the most important. But I fear for it the same kind of luxurious popularity which Spengler and Keyserling once enjoyed with dilettante dealers in spiritual crisis: for its conclusion can be summed in a single sentence: "If human civilisation is to survive we must find and employ a psycho-physical technique which will enable us to put into practice an ethical code of perfection": which posted on the wayside pulpit of a Higher Thought Church could do a lot of moral damage to people on passing buses. Mr. Heard knows

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NOVELS of the week

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that well enough: he realises that in the past lack of training in such techniques has led "to extreme sensualism and to insanity, and a less excessive but equally damaging failure is collapse into fraud and hieratic arrogance"; that even with training there are physiological and mental risks. But these practical dangers apart, my own immediate reaction to such a thesis is suspicion, even fear; I do not know what such a psychological praxis is going to do to me: I am afraid my mind would lose its bearings on the current culture of its environment, become less intelligent, less aware, less individual. All this book is aimed to show that attitude wrong.

It argues from biology and from human history that the single condition of progress is the maintenance of sensitiveness against specialised efficiency, of the will to explore what is unknown against "the relaxation of believing you have at last found certainty." The extinct monster mammals, and sharks, fixed and predatory, are the antitheses of man, who has owed his biological survival to avoiding, not to cultivating, individualism and violence. In human history Ghenghis, Napoleon are reversions to what man in himself nearly became but did not.

> Gibbon concludes with the quiet glee of a rationalist that as there was now no reservoir of barbarians from which civilisation might be flooded, civilisation was safe. . . . He and his age could not grasp that the destroyer is not a primitive who has become extinct but a specialised aberrant, a social "lethal mutation" which will always arise if the spiritual vitality of man fails and he shrink from the pain of always feeling—the price of progress.

That I can understand, and the argument that brings Mr. Heard to this position is a brilliant piece of writing. But I am far less clear what type of "individualism" it is he regards as necessarily breeding violence, human sacrifice and war. He says that fear, greed and malice are the three natural reactions of the self-regarding emotions which define individualism; but he nowhere clearly shows how such selfishness is related to the *excessive self-consciousness* which he diagnoses as the chief cause of our own spiritual sickness. Acute self-consciousness of a kind is surely essential to the awareness which is his biological virtue; yet he blames us both for too much self-consciousness and for neglect of introspection. He is confident that a thorough introspection shades off the boundaries of selfhood into a wider whole, and that so a mind transcends its individuality. But "this taste is me": is there no residuum, which is alone the active personality and which even introspection cannot hide? and is it necessarily fearful, greedy and malicious? One must be an initiate to know.

Religion Mr. Heard rejects as in itself providing no solution: an ethic needs a technique to make its practice possible. Professor MacMurray here draws a simple distinction between pseudo-religion and true religion: but the religion he accepts as true suffers from having no means to reconcile that service which is perfect freedom with the necessary element of *Imitation* of Christ. Mr. Dingle, from his shrubbery of dogma, advises Catholics how to tread in this dangerous world of enquiring, speculative men.

HUMPHRY HOUSE

ADAM AND EVE AND PINCHME

Satan Came to Eden. By DORA STRAUCH. *Jarrolds.* 18*s.*

Frau Strauch was a passionate young woman, who married a respectable schoolmaster much older than herself. "I thought it would be splendid to make him young again, and happy." He had similar plans for reforming her into a good *Hausfrau;* and both schemes failed. Then she met Dr. Friedrich Ritter, a doctor who, like many of his compatriots, was well on the track of the Secret of the Universe. He succeeded in being a disciple both of Nietzsche and Lao-Tse; and he was separated from his wife. Frau Strauch at once recognised her destiny. The doctor had an answer for every difficulty.

> One day I hesitantly confessed to Dr. Ritter that I could never have a child, but he consoled me, saying: "Children are an extension of the personal into world matter, a postponement of personal redemption and of the fulfilment of the ultimate duty laid upon every person to perfect himself." Fatherhood, he said, was one of the ordinary human joys which he had long since renounced. I recognised that I, still bound to Earth, must overcome and sublimate the Ego, ever dominant in woman.

For two years Frau Strauch hung wearily between her husband and her lover.

> In my own home I was still obliged to play the model *Hausfrau,* appearing with my husband at social functions wearing evening dress and high-heeled shoes. With Frederick I was an entirely different being, even in appearance. . . . Of all the evil inventions of modern costume, Frederick disliked most the civilised shoe. He had a different idea of proper human footwear, and designed for us both shoes of soft leather without heels, sewn to the shape of the feet. We often wore these when we went for walks together.

Dr. Ritter wanted to escape from civilisation and live in solitude upon an island, and "it was my conviction that Dr. Ritter's experiment as a way of life would lack nobility without a woman." So they began collecting stores:

> When I had suggested to Frederick that we should take morphia and a syringe, he had become quite furious, insisting that among the things our future life would teach us was the overcoming of pain by the power of the will. When, later on, he suggested taking a gun, it was my turn to object, insisting that to do so would be to deny our principle of living at peace with the animal creation.

They took table equipment for only one person, and only one pillow. Another preparation was not omitted.

> For years he had been carrying out a system of eating which required an extensive mastication of each mouthful. The result of this was that he had worn his teeth to stubs, and it had come to the point when he must have them crowned, if they were to be of any further use to him. He preferred to have them all removed, especially as he had a scientific desire to find out whether gums might be so far toughened as to become a substitute for teeth in chewing.

Dr. Ritter's wife was installed as housekeeper to Frau Strauch's husband—a neat arrangement which for some reason did not prove successful, and the philosophic pair took ship to the Galapagos—"he for God only, she for God in him."

The island on which they settled had little water, was covered with boulders, lava which tore the feet, trees and shrubs of so hard a wood that it defied even dynamite. The insect life was appalling. In the dry weather the sand-fleas poisoned Frau Strauch's feet by nesting in them.

> Frederick's medical skill could give me some relief, but was of little real use, failing means of protecting us from invasion. But he applied another treatment, one which had proved itself of value often in my case, as perhaps in others. He told me that I could, if I had sufficient will, erect so strong a defence-psychology around my feet that through sheer intensity of consciousness, I could be warned when any alien thing approached them.

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"A remarkable book. Like everything written or said by Mr. Keynes it deserves the full attention of the City."—*Financial News.* "The most important theoretical economic writing since Marx's *Capital*, or, if only classical economics is to be considered as comparable, since Ricardo's *Principles.*" —G. D. H. COLE (*New Statesman*).

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By SIR ALFRED ZIMMERN, *Montague Burton Professor of International Relations in the University of Oxford.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

"An exceedingly useful and, in parts, a brilliantly written book."—*Sunday Times.*

"As persuasive and stimulating and challenging as his other writings . . . contains much information that is not to be obtained from other books and documents."—Prof. C. K. WEBSTER (*Spectator*).

The Anvil of War: *Letters between* F. S. OLIVER, *author of "The Endless Adventure," and his Brother,* 1914-1918. *Edited, with Memoir, by* STEPHEN GWYNN. *Illustrated.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

"The book stands as a brilliant self-revelation of a wise, highly gifted, and kindly man, deeply versed in affairs, a counsellor of Cabinets."—*The Times.*

"His sincerity, his urgency, his zest for ideas, are as clear in these pages as the great literary ability which has made two of his books something like minor classics."—HAROLD J. LASKI (*New Statesman*).

Short History of the Jewish People 1600 B.C.—A.D. 1935

By CECIL ROTH. *With Maps.* 18*s.*

Mr. Roth's book is a learned and comprehensive study, which is set forth in a narrative style of great attraction. On the one hand he tells the traditional story of the Jews and has indicated the immense part that it has played in the development of the Hebrew nation. On the other hand, he sets forth the most assured results of modern historical and archæological research.

ENGLAND UNDER GEORGE I

The Beginnings of the Hanoverian Dynasty

By Prof. WOLFGANG MICHAEL, Ph.D. Translated and adapted under the supervision of Prof. L. B. NAMIER. [*Studies in Modern History*] 21*s.*

This volume deals with the relations of the Electoral Court and Queen Anne during the last years of her reign, with the establishment of the Hanoverian dynasty, the Jacobite Rising of 1715, and foreign relations 1715-18: the Barrier Treaty, the Anglo-Spanish Commercial Treaty, the Northern War, and the Quadruple Alliance.

Letters from India, 1829—1832: ***Being a Selection from the Correspondence of Victor Jacquemont***

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"These are surely some of the pleasantest and most amusing letters that ever came from India, and they show us the Indian world from a new standpoint."—*Manchester Guardian.*

A Reading of Life By S. R. LYSAGHT, *author of "Poems of the Unknown Way," "Horizons and Landmarks," etc.* 6*s.*

The subjects in the book's nine essays are:—First Outlook; A Reading of Nature; Beauty and Truth; Love and Sex; The Individual; Good and Evil; Old Age and Death; A Reading of Poetry; and Our Island World. "He converses about them sensibly and sensitively, and in easy agreeable prose . . . always suggestive, always open-minded."—Sir JOHN SQUIRE (*Daily Telegraph*).

The Letters of John Freeman Edited by GERTRUDE FREEMAN and SIR JOHN SQUIRE and with an Introduction by WALTER DE LA MARE. *With portrait.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

"Charles Lamb . . . would, I feel, have welcomed these *Letters* as the expression of a sympathetic mind delightfully functioning in oddly kindred circumstances . . . high-spirited, spontaneous and graceful."—*Punch.*

The New Gossoon: ***A Comedy in Three Acts.***

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MACMILLAN

This worked well, but when the rains came the settlers were overwhelmed with cockroaches and beetles, a dozen kinds of caterpillars, plant-lice, and ants. "They came in legions and where they touched they stung." Nothing was safe from them, and the efficacy of "defence-psychology" was apparently limited. Frau Strauch found consolation in pet animals and in flowers, and then "Frederick would notice my divided attention, and resent it bitterly, for to him, with his unswerving attachment to the great purpose with which we had both come to Floreana, my apparently incurable attachment to worldly things was a source of grief and disappointment. 'Your affection for all these wild creatures here, and for your plants and chickens, is no more or less than a flattering and cherishing of the animal in yourself.'"

Then there was the Indian servant who insisted on shooting animals:

> One misery was hardly overcome before another, and a worse, arrived. Our vegetarian regime had created in both Frederick and me an organic antagonism towards meat, but now Frederick began to force us to become carnivorous. He said that since we were compelled not only to suffer but also to collaborate in the killing of animals, we were also morally obliged to put the prey to its fullest uses. The physical result of this, no doubt, high moral point of view, was that we were both distressed by a general feeling of acute discomfort, that painful and unsightly sores came out upon our bodies and that my finger-tips began to fester underneath the nails. This condition robbed us of so much energy and strength, of which our normal stock was nothing like enough for the existing labour of the island, that I pleaded hard with Frederick to abandon logic and the ethics of slaughter for the sake of our health. But I besought in vain.

Into this "Eden" Satan came in the form of a bogus Baroness with two lovers. But the persecution which she inflicted on the two idealists seems slight in comparison with the ordeals they imposed upon themselves. At last one of the lovers murdered the Baroness and his rival, himself dying of thirst soon afterwards on a barren island not far away. But this melodrama is written mostly from conjecture, and without the details which would make it interesting. Frau Strauch's book is a fascinating record, written with an admirable directness, and the reader is left with quite affectionate feelings for the authoress. How, we wonder, does she adapt herself to the hardships and follies, different in kind but not in degree, of Nazi Germany? Her story can be recommended to the more indiscriminating disciples of D. H. Lawrence. Having read it, one doesn't know whether to marvel more at indomitable human courage or at incurable human silliness.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

There IS a man

Fascism, as it is expressed in the flabby person of Herman Goering, has done at least one noble service to mankind. It revealed solid and enduring against the changing skies of unhealthy dictatorships, the honest and splendid figure of Dimitroff. Forgive the adjectives: we feel that way. This friend of man, whose courage and whose wits startled even the corpses in the Athenæum, might have lived and died in comparative obscurity, had he not been the unwitting instrument, as Sacco and Vanzetti were unwitting instruments, and as Matteotti was, with which history is ever more and more forcing capitalism to destroy itself. He was a nine days' wonder in capitalist worlds, and now in the foggy air of intellectual parlours he is *vieux jeu*: other idols such as Charles Laughton or Noel Coward or a royal baby have taken his place. But Dimitroff, impolite fellow that he is, goes on, an inspiration to tired and unhappy men and women, a guide to those who would so change the order of things that only individual self-dissatisfaction will make unhappiness. It is all very disturbing, no doubt, that such a man should be so misguided as to choose that side of the fence on which he wishes to make his home, but there it is. Facts are facts, and you can't get away from them. That Dimitroff, out of whose courage you once got a kick, Madame, is still going strong you will doubtless be surprised to hear. But he is. And incidentally his life work well shows that the Marxism, which you probably still believe to be a rigid doctrine which denies the individual, is in fact more flexible than any other. But that's by the way. What are not by the way are Dimitroff's *Letters from Prison* which we have just published in conjunction with Victor Gollancz. Why not have a word with your bookseller about it? If he hasn't got it down don't walk out in a huff: the book will keep and he can get it for you in a day. Price? only 6*s.*: less that is than a stall for one of those plays you feel you always ought to see, and never enjoy.

By the way, again *The Eye* will be a double number. January was delayed by the chicken-pox and February is held up for an important announcement which is pending. The January–February number will be ready next week. Apologies. We do not say it is worth waiting for, but it is quite good.

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MR. BELLOC ON THE HOLY LAND

The Battle Ground. By HILAIRE BELLOC. *Cassell.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

This book, like nearly all of Mr. Belloc's, leaves us with a feeling of sadness and frustration. He has always had powers of writing, historical imagination, and a grim sense of humour, which, if they were controlled and directed by even the dimmest appreciation of objectivity and truth, would have made him a considerable writer and historian. Even as it is, he again and again stirs one's interest and, if one can shut one's ears to his perpetual nagging at someone or something, one's imagination to capture something new and strange out of the past. In this book there are flashes of the kind, in the chapter on Assyria, in the story of Greece which never grows stale, and the strange historical interlude of the Maccabees. Yet the book, as a whole, is profoundly depressing. The main reason is that Mr. Belloc continually perverts his great gifts for little purposes unworthy of him and of them. Take first the very serious question of the relation between the historian and the Christian or Roman Catholic when united in the same body. If a man really believed the dogmas and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church and—what is almost more important—understood the implications of that belief, his interpretation of history would be very seriously affected. But not particularly, as Mr. Belloc seems to assume, his interpretation of the history of Syria. If God's "design" really does determine human history, it has determined it presumably no less and no more in Timbuctoo than in Jerusalem. The question is raised from the very first words in Mr. Belloc's preface, but is never seriously faced or discussed by him. Ninety per cent. of his history might have been written by an atheist without any reference to or conception of God's design in it. And design is brought into the other ten per cent. more often than not in order that Mr. Belloc may nag at a class of persons whom Mr. Belloc dislikes. It begins already in the preface, which is trivial and silly, unless Mr. Belloc intended to write a comic history of Syria, which he has certainly not done. The most prejudiced agnostic is well aware that dozens of people who hold Mr. Belloc's beliefs have written admirable histories of the Jews, Syria, Greece, and Rome in which the truth of those beliefs is assumed. What, then, is the point in the humour which laboriously pretends that people will be shocked to hear that Mr. Belloc is a Roman Catholic?

What is shocking is not that Mr. Belloc is a Roman Catholic, but that he takes so trivial a view of the fact and uses his great gifts for such trivial purposes. We referred above to the fact of his continual nagging at persons whom he does not like. In that fact may, probably, be discovered the cause of his having failed to become, as he might have become, a considerable writer and historian. Even now, in the rare moments when he can forget to hate the insignificant Mr. A. or the quite umimportant Mr. B. and can let his mind or imagination play disinterestedly upon some fact or problem which he takes pleasure in contemplating—and not because of the pleasure he feels from knowing that his pleasure will give pain to the insignificant Mr. A. or the unimportant Mr. B.—then it is still possible to realise what he and we have lost by the embitterment of Mr. Belloc. And unfortunately, of course, he does his best to rub this fact in positively as well as negatively. In his present book the nagging is so perverse, so wearisome, and so depressing. There is, for instance, a class of persons against whom, for some reason or other, he has conceived a very special grudge. They are the "learned" or "scientific" scholars, archaeologists, textual critics, historians upon whose researches and labours three-quarters of what passes as history to-day is based. Now it is almost certainly true that a large number of these persons are pedants and a certain number of them pompous frauds, that much which is accepted as truth is really hypothesis based upon an infinite series of hypotheses, that a good deal of scientific history is scientific and historical mumbo-jumbo. But there is also no doubt that there is a large residuum of most important knowledge which the world has gained from the work of these men. If Mr. Belloc had written his book in the middle of the eighteenth century, it would have

Genghis Khan

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AMONG THE WATERFALLS OF THE WORLD

by EDWARD C. RASHLEIGH

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been utterly different from what it is to-day, different not only in its attitude towards history and historical fact, but also in its contents, in the historical facts which he presents as the truth to his readers. The difference in Mr. Belloc's attitude, the very facts which he presents as true are directly due to the work of these men. Yet he nags and nags and nags at them as though they were all frauds, ninnies, or imbeciles and that all that had ever been written by them was lies, until the reader can no longer keep his attention upon the history of Syria owing to the insistent problem of Mr. Belloc's grudge against the "learned."

LEONARD WOOLF

MORE PEOPLE

Narrow Waters: Being the Autobiography of a Common Man. *Hodge.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

What I Left Unsaid. By DAISY PRINCESS OF PLESS. *Cassell.* 15*s.*

Living High. By ALICIA O'REARDON OVERBECK. *Lovat Dickson.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Narrow Waters is a jumble of memories and opinions, with an occasional scrap of narrative thrown in. It is *not* (whatever its author may think) an autobiography; and the publishers hasten to assure us that its author is *not* (whatever he may choose to say) a Common Man. However, they need not have protested. "Common" is meant to express the unknown writer's social standing, and on that he prides himself—all the best people (Christ, for instance) have been common men. He prides himself likewise on being a "Philistine"—i.e., one of those independent spirits who don't care a hoot about Old Masters, but know what they like. He "cannot refrain from sniggering at the good and great." One day, in the mummy room at the British Museum, he suddenly thought: These were once awfully important people, like Lord Brentford and Mr. Winston Churchill—"and in some odd way I felt quite comforted." He has, to put it differently, a social grievance, never very long absent from his mind.

To own the worst—he talks about "looking into his mate's kind eyes." Of his "mate's" character, not being a "hound," he will say nothing; and he dismisses her with this graceful compliment: "Much of what I am, she helped to make me." Certainly we hear a good deal of what he is: of his "charity almost surpassing belief. . . . (Yet I am not perhaps so much tolerant as understanding)": of his numerous personalities—"I have Me and Henry and Roger . . . Roger is a poet, mark you, a real poet. . . . Henry and I are real pals"—and so on. He is a simple soul; an easy prey. But then he is also a very nice man, with a great deal of intelligence, and an unusually wide range of interests. His ideas are far superior to his vocabulary, and it is hard to say which strikes one most—his good sense or his invariable good feeling. *Narrow Waters*, if not exactly literature, is at least a book which will give pleasure to many people, and inspire some kindness for its author, I should think, in most.

Next, the "Common Woman"—for so, in one sense, the Princess of Pless may well be called. I am afraid she does not compare well with the Common Man, though her self-praise is generally more oblique. For instance: "I am sure that the adage, silence is golden, was written by a man, because (as every woman knows) no man is capable of looking unaided into the heart of a matter, and every real man who succeeds in doing so is—fortunately for himself—unwittingly led by the nose by some woman." To be frank, the introductory and concluding chapters of this book seemed to me more fatuous than anything I had read for years. The rest of it is largely an enumeration of distinguished people (people our Common Man would call "the good and great"), with random comments on them and the age and the European situation, delivered in a manner alternating between sentiment and what an unfriendly critic might call waspishness. We are shown also a number of letters written to the Princess by German admirers, especially during the war; these are fairly interesting, but not of peculiar interest as letters go. However, it is reasonable to suppose that what "Daisy" did not leave unsaid was more worth saying, and the *addenda* themselves may easily appear more valuable to those who have read what came before.

I myself greatly preferred Mrs. Overbeck and her stories of home life in the Andes. She spent years there with her husband, in different mining camps, and has now turned the experience to account in a book which is unpretentious, lively, sensible, and in parts very funny. And (thank goodness) her moments of sentiment are only moments—she is American, which perhaps accounts for this blessed restraint. She is also, it seems, a novelist, and certainly makes a novelist's use of her material. It is not an important book, but it will pass the time pleasantly.

K. JOHN

THE MINERS' CASE

The Coal Scuttle. By JOSEPH JONES, C.B.E., J.P. *Faber.* 5*s.*

For the discontents of its workers, the incompetence of its owners, and the trouble that it has given to the community throughout the post-war years, coal-mining takes pride of place among British industries. Another national strike has only just been averted by an eleventh-hour compromise—a compromise which goes but a little way to meet the workers' claims. The public has a genuine, if vague, sympathy for the miners in their misery, and a much vaguer understanding of the roots of it. This book by the President of the Mineworkers' Federation of Great Britain is a clear and straightforward statement of the miners' case—which is also the nation's case. It is written with an intimate knowledge of the subject, and with a remarkable restraint; it describes the conditions in the coalfields—the wages, the work and the lack of work, the organisation of the industry as it is and as it ought to be.

The miners' conditions to-day, as Mr. Jones shows, are deplorable. The wage statistics that he quotes are not his own invention; they are to be found in Government reports. Average earnings ranged (in 1934) from a little over 50*s.* a week in Scotland to a bare £2 in Durham—to which may be added the trifling value of allowances in kind, averaging for the country as a whole about 4*d.* a day. Wage rates have been heavily cut in the last ten years and in most districts hours have been lengthened. The drop in wages, it is true, is not quite so appalling as would appear from the comparative figures given on one page of this book. Prices of other commodities besides coal have fallen, and the cost of living figure, which was 75 in 1924, had come down to 41 in 1934. (It is now 47.) Thus, though the Durham miner's earnings dropped from 9*s.* 11½*d.* per shift in 1924 to 8*s.* 1.39*d.* in 1934, his real wage had hardly altered. Nevertheless, the fact remains—and it is a shameful fact—that myriads of men were in 1934, and are to-day, getting a wage which puts them (if they are men with families) below the Rowntree "Human Needs" standard. Coal-mining, in short, one of our great staple industries, is a sweated industry, as well as a dangerous industry and an industry with an excessive roll of unemployment.

In a valuable chapter on Wages Ascertainment, Mr. Jones explains what few laymen have been able to fathom—how the miners' wages are arrived at. The system looks fair on the face of it; actually it often produces grossly unfair results, owing to the ingenious business methods practised by many colliery companies in the disposal of their coal. But, of course, the main cause of low wages, as of other grievances, lies deeper than this—in the general organisation, or disorganisation, of the industry, with its fantastic multiplicity of ownership, its fierce internal competition (only slightly modified by recent half-hearted reforms), its haphazard development. Here again Mr. Jones needs to paint no picture of his own; he quotes from the damning indictment of the Coal Mines Reorganisation Committee published in December, 1933.

What are the remedies for this disease? There is a choice of two, the one a series of palliatives, the other a radical cure. Under the present system of private ownership it may be possible to nationalise royalties, to bring about some greater measure of co-ordination, to institute some obvious economies in production and transport and selling, to reduce unemployment by raising the age of entry, shortening the hours of work and granting pensions to the older men. But the success of such a programme would, it is clear, depend largely on a body of employers who appear to have neither the will nor the power to set their house in order; and even if it were fully carried out, it would be no more than a patching up. What is wanted, as Mr. Jones argues, is a new coal industry, with an immense development of by-products, unified under public ownership and control. The socialisation of the mines is not a novel proposal. But it is as urgent as it was when it was put forward by the Sankey Commission in 1919, and as it has been ever since, not merely to rescue the miners from their plight, but to save a great national industry from perdition.

C. M. L.

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UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment, an International Problem. A Report by a Study Group of Members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. *Oxford University Press.* 25s.

Labour in Agriculture. An International Survey. By LOUISE E. HOWARD. *Oxford University Press.* 18s.

These two volumes, both issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, belong to a type that is easier to perceive than to review. They are principally factual surveys, bringing together a mass of material that would otherwise remain for the most part inaccessible in official and unofficial publications written in a number of languages, and far too scattered for anyone except a whole-time expert to have leisure to hunt them out. This applies especially to Mrs. Howard's admirable survey of labour conditions in agriculture almost from China to Peru—so wide is the range of countries she brings within the scope of her province for information. It is safe to say that such a report could not have been written but for the existence of the I.L.O.; for it was in its service, as head of the agricultural department, that Mrs. Howard gathered her facts together. Their general effect is to bring out not only the low level of wages and living conditions in agriculture as compared with industry in all the countries surveyed—it is interesting to note that the disparity is now less in Great Britain than in most others—but also the extreme diversity of conditions of employment, which would make accurate international comparisons impossible even if there were no other difficulties in the way.

Mrs. Howard's book is essentially pioneer work; for no survey on at all comparable lines exists. Unemployment is, on the other hand, a trodden field; and most of the factual material set out in the other volume before us is relatively well known, at any rate to students. It is none the less convenient to have it assembled in a single volume, and the meaning of a good many of the crude figures cleared up. And it is also useful to have the experience of the leading countries in the field of "public works" policy for dealing with unemployment summarised and made the subject of intelligent comment—as well as the various systems of unemployment, insurance and relief, placement services, training methods, and so on. The chief defect of this "study-group" report is that it goes either too far or not far enough; for the authors cannot help getting involved in a discussion of the "trade cycle" and of monetary theories from which they have no space to extricate themselves in a satisfactory way. Mrs. Howard's volume, if the less ambitious, is the more to be praised of the two, for she has made the most of a very difficult job in handling a wide variety of unco-ordinated material; and her comments are always sensible, and often suggestive. G. D. H. C.

NEWNHAM

Newnham: An Informal Biography. By MARY AGNES HAMILTON. *Faber and Faber.* 5s.

The middle years of the nineteenth century were dark ages, so Mrs. Hamilton tells us, in the girls' schoolroom, where an illiterate and miserably unhappy governess taught her charges a smattering of French and music, "accomplishments and deportment." And yet—Elizabeth Barrett, at the age of eight, was reading Homer in the original: the favourite reading of George Eliot at seven (she was "not precocious" as a little girl) was *Rasselas*, *Pilgrim's Progress* and Defoe's *History of the Devil*; while Harriet Martineau at eleven had got "into the habit of thinking in Latin."

Whatever is to be made of this confusing picture, there seems no doubt that by 1860 or so female education was in a stifling condition and badly in need of artificial respiration. Since women are often the worst enemies of their own sex, the fact that the reigning sovereign was a woman may have had some effect.

The story of Newnham begins dramatically in 1871, when five girl students, all unusually brilliant and three of them strikingly good-looking, took up residence in Cambridge with permission to read for the Higher Local examinations. Their life was not gay. They had to sweep and dust, they had no separate studies, but all dined and worked at one table. They had to be in at 6.30. Their walks were taken under strictest chaperonage. But many of the most distinguished men and women of their day hurried forward to supply lectures, coaching, money, and moral support, and at the end of ten years such tremendous strides had been made that Newnham was a College with two Halls of its own and more than seventy students, who were now sitting for the Tripos examinations and doing extremely well in them.

The hero of the battle was Henry Sidgwick, then a brilliant young don in his twenties, whose moderation and desire to get things done "without fuss" so irritated his co-worker Miss Emily Davies (the founder of Girton) that she went so far as to describe him as "the serpent who was eating out her vitals." But get things done he did, and evidently no one could resist Dr. Sidgwick, for some time later the serpent had become "certainly a very engaging man." The highly intelligent, charming and noble figures of Dr. and Mrs. Sidgwick (whose death was announced last week) stand out from this book, and for that alone it would be well worth reading.

Why is it that so little advance has been made in the last fifty years—far less it would seem than in the first ten? Newnham went through various phases—including a "greenery-yallery," when an eminent student came in to lunch with a lily, whose beauty she declared was dinner enough. Perhaps it was not much less substantial than what the College provided. But in the years just before the war, life was still "a life in some respects curiously thin. Notably absent from it was any vivid awareness of the other sex." "Smoking was taboo." As visitors males "were admitted only when a bored don sat by as gooseberry." The days passed monotonously in a round of "morning lectures, games from 1.30 to 3 o'clock, followed by a cup of astonishingly bad tea."

And though the war had its effect, of course, the position to-day is surprisingly little changed. The atmosphere of a girls' high school still hangs closely about the women's colleges; the students are not treated as free and rational adults to anything like the same extent as the men. (A girl student, for instance, was recently told that she could not both go to a ball and act in a play in one term.) It is difficult to agree with Mrs. Hamilton that "freedom is the most characteristic note."

The Royal Commission of 1864 reported that Victorian education did not even fit women to be wives and mothers, but only to catch a husband. It is tempting to say that present-day university education does not fit them to be human beings, but only schoolmistresses. What is more serious, except in the case of teachers, a degree is hardly of any use to a girl who wants to earn her living—one who has taken a good course at a secretarial college often carries off a better and more interesting job.

No one in their senses nowadays would say that feminine charm is incompatible with intellect; but the two photographs used in this book to illustrate "Newnham to-day" show cricket and hockey being played by stocky young women, and might have been deliberately chosen to prove that outworn thesis. F. B.

SHORTER NOTICES

In the Second Year. By STORM JAMESON. *Cassell.* 7s. 6d.

Miss Storm Jameson has succeeded to a very remarkable extent in doing the impossible. For it was surely more than venturesome to write a novel about England under Fascist rule and include in it a sensitive study of Hitler and Röhm culminating in the events of June 30th. The reader necessarily finds himself asking at the same time whether this is meant to be a picture of the sort of man Hitler is and the sort of man Röhm was or merely a novel about people who would hold such positions if Fascism did win in England. Such confusions are not good for a novel but they do not prevent it being eminently readable and valuable. Leaving aside the question about whether or not it is history, the story of the English Röhm and Hitler is excellently told and stands by itself, and the whole story with its final emphasis on the impossibility of being merely Liberal or Social Democrat is calculated to shock or perhaps convince some people who are both. A sincere and moving book.

The People's Year Book, 1936. *Co-operative Wholesale Society.* Cloth 2s.; paper 1s.

This hardy annual shows no falling off in the interest and variety of its contents. It records, as usual, substantial progress in all the main activities of the Co-operative Movement. The retail stores have increased their membership (the total in 1934, the latest period for which full figures are available, was nearly 7¼ millions), their capital assets, their sales and the number of their employees. The Wholesale Societies, too, have done a bigger trade. The Co-operative Party has got more of its members back into Parliament. Besides the facts and statistics relating to Co-operation at home and abroad, the Year Book contains articles on many social and economic problems, as well as a number of excellent illustrations. Some of the articles are of first-rate interest. Thus—to mention but a few—we have "Producers' Control" by Mr. G. D. H. Cole, "Wages and Prices" by Mr. Colin Clark, "Trade Unions in 1935" by Sir Walter Citrine. There is no annual published to-day that gives better value for so small a price.

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A book which will surprise even those of us who feel we are sufficiently superior to read between the headlines and sift the news from the chaff, is "Propaganda and the News," by Will Irwin, 12/6 (McGraw-Hill).

Mr. Irwin, prominent American journalist and war time propaganda chief, gives us some startling facts explaining just how the news is twisted and distorted for reader consumption.

His story is by no means confined to America. The parts played by the Allied as well as by the German press during the World War are revealed together with the inner history of many of the fantastic atrocity stories which at the time made normally sober-minded persons boil with righteous indignation.

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Routledge

A History of the Greek World from 479 to 323 B.C. By M. L. W. LAISTNER. *Methuen.* 15s.

In this the fifth volume to be published of Methuen's History of the Greek and Roman World, Professor Laistner, who has an agreeable narrative style and an active historical conscience, treats of the century and a half that saw Hellenic culture at its zenith and the political particularism, which forbade an Hellenic Empire, at its worst. The Professor makes this particularism very vivid as he describes the internecine intrigues, and leagues, and wars, that paved the way for the Macedonian. As in the previous volumes of this history, we are given as clear an idea of the world in which these great events occurred as the authorities permit; and if there is a fault to be found with the author it is that he keeps his imagination firmly in check, and speaks by the book or holds his peace. Are we forced to conclude that Greek merchant-seamen were as timorous and ill-equipped as the authorities imply, or that the descendants of the seamen who harried the coast of Egypt eight hundred years earlier had to obtain their tin from Carthage? Again, discussing Greek religion, Professor Laistner declares that "the inner life of the average Greek is to us a sealed book." The inner life of the average man generally is; but judging by the poets he acclaimed the inner life of the average Greek must have been at least as vivid as that of any of our average contemporaries.

International Survey of Social Services, 1933. Vol. I. *King.* 15s. paper; 17s. 6d. cloth.

This is a new and enlarged edition of the *Survey* which was prepared by the I.L.O. in 1933 and showed the working, in 1930, of the social services in twenty-four different countries. Fourteen other countries have now been surveyed and their social services are shown, in a series of monographs, as they stood in 1933. This volume covers nineteen of them, including the chief European countries, the British Dominions, India, Japan and the U.S.A. Vol. II containing the rest is promised shortly. The book, which runs to some 700 pages, is well planned, and facts and figures are set out with the accuracy which we are accustomed to in the work of the I.L.O. Some of the facts and most of the figures are of course out of date, since there have been changes in one country or another in the course of the last eighteen months. But the book will nevertheless be of immense interest and value to the student of social administration.

The Life of Admiral Collingwood. By GEOFFREY MURRAY. *Hutchinson.* 18s.

As a frankly popular study of a great seaman, a sincere patriot, and a good man, Mr. Murray's life of Collingwood has much to commend it. What is flamboyant or lyrical in the telling will be readily forgiven when we leave the battle pieces and come to the man in relation to his fellow men. The greatest disciplinarian of his time, Collingwood introduced into his commands a consideration and a humanity that were not to become general in the navy until long after his death. He held it as an axiom that a discontented or mutinous ship was a reflection on the officers rather than the men; and he demonstrated in practice that to make a culprit ridiculous in the eyes of his fellows was more effective than flaying him alive and making him a martyr. This and the domestic side of the man Mr. Murray emphasises no less than his qualities as the commander beloved of Nelson, and the result is a portrait which despite a certain crudity of colour is curiously convincing.

My Pigmy and Negro Hosts. By PAUL SCHEBESTA. *Hutchinson.* 18s.

This story of an ethnologist's travels in the Belgian Congo is a sequel to the author's account of his sojourn among the pigmies. We meet the little people again, once as a settled community that instead of adopting agriculture has devoted itself to pottery, trading its wares with its neighbours for food and other requirements. Herr Schebesta gives us a graphic account of the "leopard men" following a cannibal cult and owing their name to the wounds inflicted on their victims by short knives and iron spikes fixed to their fingers. The story, which rings true and is well supported by long known rumour, was given the author by a missionary. Another good story is that of a film taken to show a raid by the Wangwana, once famed as slave-raiders, upon a negro village. Carried away by the excitement the negroes attacked in earnest. Linking such stories we have a fund of first-hand notes on the manners, customs and religions of the Congo tribes. The book, which has been admirably translated from the German by Mr. Gerald Griffen, is illustrated by many fine photographs taken by the author.

Week-end Competitions

No. 310

Set by K. John

Wordsworth has at last succeeded in getting through from "the other side," in order to complete his Ecclesiastical Sonnets by a sonnet on the Oxford Group Movement. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for this poem. (Whatever his views, for the medium's sake, he would of course abstain from anything libellous.)

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, February 28th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 308

Set by H. L. Morrow

We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a brief excursion into imaginary biography on the following lines:

The year is 1995, a new supplement to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is shortly going to press and you have been invited by the Editor to contribute not more than 300 words on any one of the following:

The MacDonalds, père et fils.
Mussolini.
Haile Selassie.
T. S. Eliot.
Y. Y. (based on internal evidence only, from his NEW STATESMAN AND NATION essays).
Anthony Eden.
Sir Samuel Hoare.
William Walton.

It is to be presumed that the libel laws have been considerably tightened and that it is an offence to libel the dead. Marks, however, will not be deducted for (apparently) fantastic statements.

Report by H. L. Morrow

The odd thing about the entries for this competition was that so few competitors took the trouble to reproduce the desiccated mannerisms of the *Britannica*. Some of them, in spite of the warning about the libel laws, were roundly abusive, many of them unforgivably used the first person, while others achieved a factless and dateless state of ecstasy which even the last edition of the *Encyclopaedia* managed to avoid. Some, such as Guy Innes, with "The MacDonalds . . . See 'Who *Was* Who,'" were as brief as they were cruel. Others, like Mr. William Bliss, with a beautifully mannered entry on Y. Y. ("He touched everything lightly, but he touched it with the point of a needle, and those who, misled by the ease of his language, should conclude that it clothes little thought, would but betray the lack of it in themselves . . ."), seemed to miss the point that I was in search of fun and fantasy.

Y. Y. was by a long head the favourite and many strange inferences were made from his dislike of boiled cabbage, his early love of music-halls and his taste for tobacco. Most of the entries prophesied a happy, if anonymous, end for him, except Allan M. Laing, who wrote: "When the obscure periodical he wrote for was suppressed by the Hairshirts, in 1939 (So soon, Mr. Laing?), he retired to Belfast where, only a year later, he was arrested for bungling the Hail Mosley! and hanged from the very lamppost to which he had clung as a child." I am not sure, however, whether the execution of Y. Y. might not in the long run be preferable to the end prophesied by Eremita for Mr. T. S. Eliot who, in 1956, on the death of Sir John Squire, is to succeed to the vacant laureateship: "His last period has been compared with the later years of Wordsworth or Swinburne. It is noteworthy that while Eliot had been much occupied with the theme of old-age before 1930, he turned at the end of his life to subjects drawn from childhood, e.g., the charming Bubbles (1960). Eliot died in 1971, the doyen of neo-Elizabethan letters. Few poets have begun more unpromisingly, and few have ended by enjoying greater popularity. It was a disappointment to him that many friends and critics who had enthusiastically admired his early work, found themselves unable to keep pace with his later development, but he survived his detractors."

For neatness of phrase as well as for sure-footedness on a particularly tricky tight-rope the first prize must go to T. Naisby, for the following on the MacDonalds:

FIRST PRIZE

MACDONALD, J. RAMSAY,

airman and broadcaster, was the first air enthusiast to become Prime Minister of Great Britain. His interests and his ideas were so much in the air that he rarely received the full support of his many parties. It was largely due to the enthusiasm of this air "ace" that the flying "triumphs" of the twenties and thirties were achieved. His motto, "Up, and Up, and Up" covered, almost to the point of concealment, his public and personal philosophy.

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It would perhaps be inaccurate to say that he invented the system of enforced leisure for "the working classes," but the frequency with which the theme occurs in his speeches shows that he gave much attention to it. Strangely enough, during this time, the device of "unemployment," as it was then called, was very unpopular.

MacDonald's critics always declared that his views were not comprehensible, but at any rate they were sufficiently comprehensive to enable him to reconcile them with Conservatism, Liberalism, and Socialism in a National Government whose principles were quite distinct from each of its components. Therein lay his particular genius—a genius, it must be said, that did not, in the end, secure the full appreciation of the non-academic mind.

But it is for his Sunday newspaper articles that Mr. MacDonald will be chiefly remembered. They have been published as Volume XXVII of his "Collected Speeches," and afford a liberal education to those who have the inclination to read them. To him, Socialism was an ideal—an ideal to be kept ever ahead and never to be approached. Such is the very essence of the true ideal, and it can never be said of him that he polluted it by practical recognition or by undue familiarity.

MACDONALD, MALCOLM,
son of the above. T. NAISBY

As for the second prize, I am forced to award it to Mr. Digby Willoughby, whose Mussolini has the awful ring of truth about it:

SECOND PRIZE

MUSSOLINI (Benito)—Italian Politician. Born at Predappio in 1883, the story of his descent from the Antonine Caesars current in Fascist Youth movements toward the latter end of his reign may now be considered as apocryphal, as also may accounts of miraculous occurrences at the time of his birth, of which the most famous is that of a serpent said to have appeared at Tivoli and to have held a conversation in Latin with a Nordic professor of Sanscrit, on the One and the Many, at the same time prophesying the coming of a great ruler.

In fact, after an undistinguished boyhood, he met with but indifferent success as a Socialist journalist and became a Fascist politician. As leader of this party he solved the difficulties of constitutional government by its abolition and was Dictator of Italy from 1922 to 1937.

Crowned Imperator Superbus I in the Colosseum on January 4th, 1937, on May 23rd of the same year declaring himself to be the Lion of Judah and Defender of the Faithful, he was last seen fording the river Takkaze in the Abyssinian province of Tigre borne on a golden litter by Askaris dressed as Roman legionaries.

The low opinion of his financial abilities held by the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Governments of National Emergency which followed his reign led to the entire neglect of his memory. But in 1962 a monument to him by the sculptor Alberto Giacometti was erected at Como out of monies furnished by the bequest of an Englishwoman, Lady Houston. It was, however, smashed during the anti-Surréaliste riots of 1973 and has not been replaced.

For detailed studies compare *Nymphenberger* "Psychopathologie" Vol. V (1958) and *del Vecchio* "Mare Nostrum" (1945).

The *Daily Mail Wonder Book of Dictators* (1940) is not recommended.

DIGBY WILLOUGHBY

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PROBLEM 165.—AT THE YARD

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"So?" said the Assistant Commissioner. "What questions have you put?"

The Inspector produced his notebook.

"First, Sir, *who cracked that crib at Dalston?* The Smasher says it was Gentleman Jeans; Chalker says it was the Smasher; and One-Eyed Joe attributes the job to Chalker. But both the others declare it was One-Eyed Joe."

"So it was, I should think," said the Assistant Commissioner.

"Indeed, Sir?" said Lollipop. "I should back Chalker's verdict, in this instance. Second question: *Who is now in possession of the swag?* The Smasher, Chalker and Bill Baccarat all declare that it's Toadlip; Joe and Gentleman Jeans put their money on The Spike."

"Take out a warrant against Toadlip," said the Assistant Commissioner.

"Very good, Sir. Third question: *Where are the gang's headquarters?* The Smasher says Tottenham; Bill Baccarat says Mile End. The other three, however, all say Kensal Green."

"Kensal Green it must be," said the Assistant Commissioner. "Any more questions?"

"Sure," said Lollipop. "No. 4. *How many are there in the gang?* One-Eyed Joe says nine; The Smasher and Gentleman Jeans say eight; Chalker and Bill Baccarat say seven."

"I'll express no opinion on that."

"Very good, Sir. Now I come to question 5: *Where is Big Ben in hiding?* Here, again, I get three answers. At Brighton, according to Chalker; at the Spider's Hole, if I am to believe One-Eyed Joe and the Smasher; in the Isle of Dogs, according to Bill Baccarat and Jeans."

"Try the Isle of Dogs."

"My last question," said Lollipop, in a slightly irritated tone, "was: *Who laid out Constable Hoof?* There was the usual display of 'honour among thieves.' The Smasher and Gentleman Jeans attribute this crime to Chalker; Bill Baccarat and Chalker declare the culprit to be Joe. And Joe himself plumps for Jeans. And that, Sir, is all I can get out of them."

A humorous twinkle showed itself in the Assistant Commissioner's face. "Don't take it to heart, Lollipop," he said. "Take an evening off; go to a music-hall with your wife, and come back again in the morning."

"I'm not married, Sir," said Lollipop gloomily.

Lollipop did not know what we know: that with each member of the gang it is an irrefragable rule to answer truthfully one question, and one question only, out of three. Nor did he know—what we know also—that each of his questions has been answered truthfully by someone.

Which of his questions—if any—can we answer?

PROBLEM 163.—MY 'PHONE NUMBER IS 2592

which $= 2^5 9^2$.

This can be most readily solved by "intelligent" trial and error (i.e., making some use of digital analysis, etc.). There is no simple formula. Two or three solvers have produced some quite alarming equations, and one ingenious fellow uses logarithms. There are hundreds of correct answers.

PROBLEM 162.—CRICKET

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: J. B. H. Pegler, Woburn Lodge, Purley.

Seven points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10s. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope; but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution. CALIBAN

Company Meeting

NATIONAL MUTUAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY

MR. J. M. KEYNES' ADDRESS

THE Annual General Meeting of the Society was held in the hall of the Chartered Insurance Institute, Aldermanbury, London, on Wednesday last. Mr. J. M. Keynes, Chairman, presiding, said (in part):

Our Annual Report shows a substantial increase in the volume of our new business to a figure just less than £1,000,000. Perhaps the most trustworthy guide to the progress of the business is the yearly premium income, and this has shown a larger increase than for many years past.

Last year our mortality experience was exceptionally favourable. This year the tide has turned, and has left us with a greatly diminished, though not unsatisfactory mortality profit. On the other hand, the surrenders have been unusually light, lighter, indeed, than in any year since 1927, which is a welcome indication of the improved financial position of our policyholders.

The results of our investment policy during the year may be considered, I think, as very satisfactory. This is not for us a valuation period, but it has been usual in the past for me to give you annually the exact results of the revaluation of our investments at the end of each year. This shows capital profits of £203,000 equal to 3.5 per cent. of our Stock Exchange securities and 2.9 per cent. of our total assets.

We have succeeded in maintaining the rate of interest at which we have been able to invest the new funds accruing in our hands, and the decline in the net rate of interest on our total funds from £3 18*s.* 6*d.* per cent. to £3 16*s.* 7*d.* per cent. is entirely due to the effect of writing up the Fund to correspond to the additional capital profits, and not to a decline in the absolute amount of the income receipts. The rate of interest earned on our net liabilities works out at over 4½ per cent. compared with the rate of 3¾ per cent. assumed in our actuarial valuation.

Although bonus distributions are now biennial instead of annual, the usual internal actuarial valuation has been made. While this has shown some diminution in the year's trading surplus as compared with 1934, almost wholly because of the reduced level of profits from mortality mentioned above, the trading surplus earned last year is much more than sufficient to cover the normal bonuses declared a year ago. Apart from this margin of trading surplus, the Society enters upon the current year, at the end of which a further distribution is due to be made, with a carry forward of £279,000 together with capital profits earned last year of £203,000 and Reserve Funds totalling £750,000. Accordingly, the Board has had no hesitation in deciding to pay interim bonuses on claims arising this year at the full normal rates as before.

Two years ago I gave reasons for expecting a further fall in the long-term rate of interest. Last year I spoke more doubtfully, since it seemed to me that we were between two sets of conflicting forces, and I concluded that we most needed a consolidation of the existing position coupled with a greater degree of confidence in the maintenance of the existing rates of interest. What is the prospect of the coming year?

In speaking of future prospects it is often difficult to make the distinction clear between what one considers the most desirable in the public interest and what one reckons to be the most probable in the actual circumstances. For unfortunately the course of events which is the most desirable is not always the most probable! Let me explain, therefore, that on this occasion I am primarily concerned with the question of what policy is most advisable.

If the present relatively (though not absolutely) satisfactory position is to be protected from subsequent reaction, I am sure that a further reduction in the long-term rate of interest—which, it must be remembered, will not produce its full effects for a considerable time—is urgently called for. But it is natural to ask by what means this result can be brought about. In attempting to answer this question there are certain considerations which I should like to call to your attention.

Short-term money to-day is extremely cheap. But it is confidence in the *future* of short-term rates which is required to bring down long-term rates. Now the policy of the Treasury is not calculated to promote such confidence. They seem reluctant to issue bonds of from 5 to 10 years maturity and anxious to reduce the short-term debt, in spite of the extraordinary cheapness with which it can be carried. They starve the Banks and the Money Market of the type of security which the sound conduct of their business admittedly requires, and they pay a higher rate of interest than they need. Take as an example their latest issue. They simultaneously borrowed at 1½ per cent. for 5 years and at 2¾ per cent. for 25 years. They used part of the proceeds to repay short-term debt which was costing them about ½ per cent. There can be no rational explanation of the longer dated issue except that they themselves have no confidence in the short-term rate of interest remaining low. Since they largely control the situation, it is natural that humbler folk should be influenced by what the Treasury seem to expect. I suggest, therefore, that it is at least as important that the Treasury should themselves show confidence in the future of the short-term rate of interest, as that they should maintain a low rate for the time being.

The other main factor (besides confidence in the future of short-term rates) in bringing down long-term rates of interest is a supply of bank-money fully adequate to satisfy the community's demand for liquidity. The following figures are, I think, instructive. In the last quarter of 1932 the Bank of England's open-market policy had the effect of increasing the volume of bank deposits to a total 12 per cent. higher than in the last quarter of the previous year. During the same period both the index of production and the index of prices were slightly receding. As a result the price of fixed interest securities rose during this period by 33 per cent. Two years later the volume of bank-money was practically unchanged, although the index of production had risen appreciably and the index of prices slightly. Nevertheless there was a further rise of some 12 per cent. in fixed interest securities, partly due to the delayed effect of the Bank of England's earlier measures. Last year the Bank of England again increased the volume of bank-money by about 6 per cent. This was undoubtedly a move in the right direction; but it was not quite enough even to sustain the level of long-term Government securities, and not nearly enough to continue their upward movement in a year in which the London and Cambridge index of production (the Board of Trade index is not yet available) rose 10 per cent., the index of wholesale prices 4 per cent. and that of the cost of living 3 per cent. The net result is, comparing the end of 1935 with the end of 1932, that, whereas the index of production has risen 33 per cent., wholesale prices nearly 8 per cent. and the cost of living nearly 4 per cent., the volume of bank-money has risen only 6 per cent. There are, of course, many other factors of which account must be taken; and these must have been favourable to long-dated securities in view of the way in which the latter have maintained their prices. But it is evident that the time has come for another increase in the volume of bank-money, if we wish long-term rates of interest to fall further. The increase should, of course, be very gradual and almost unnoticeable from week to week, and it should be accompanied by an increase in the supply of Government securities of a maturity suitable for the banks to hold in substantial volume.

The Treasury and the Bank of England undoubtedly deserve great credit for the large steps which they have already taken in the right direction. That they have not achieved more is mainly due, I think, to their underestimating their own powers to achieve what they recognise as desirable. It is true that there exist certain important limitations on their power to influence the rate of interest. But I doubt if these limitations are yet operative. The two main limitations are, respectively, external and internal. So long as the public is as effectively free to lend abroad as to lend at home, it is obvious that domestic rates of interest cannot fall far below their normal parity with foreign rates without seriously upsetting the balance of international payments. In pre-war days this limitation was of great importance. But with our exchanges no longer tied to gold, with the admirable control over the pace of foreign issues which the Bank of England has established, and with the diminished credit of many former large-scale borrowers, the position is greatly changed. I do not believe that this factor need be regarded to-day as standing in the way of a further reduction in the rate of interest. If I were told that the resources of the Exchange Equilisation Fund are virtually exhausted, I might change my opinion, at least to the extent of advocating a stricter control of foreign investment especially in American stocks. But I am hopeful that this is not the case.

The other, internal, limitation will come into operation when we have what is for practical purposes a state of full employment. In such circumstances a further fall in the rate of interest will merely stimulate a competition for current output which will result in an inflationary rise of prices. Pre-war theory presumed that this was the normal state of affairs. Would that it were! But, in fact, this happy condition is not yet ours. When it is, the rate of interest will have fallen far enough for the time being.

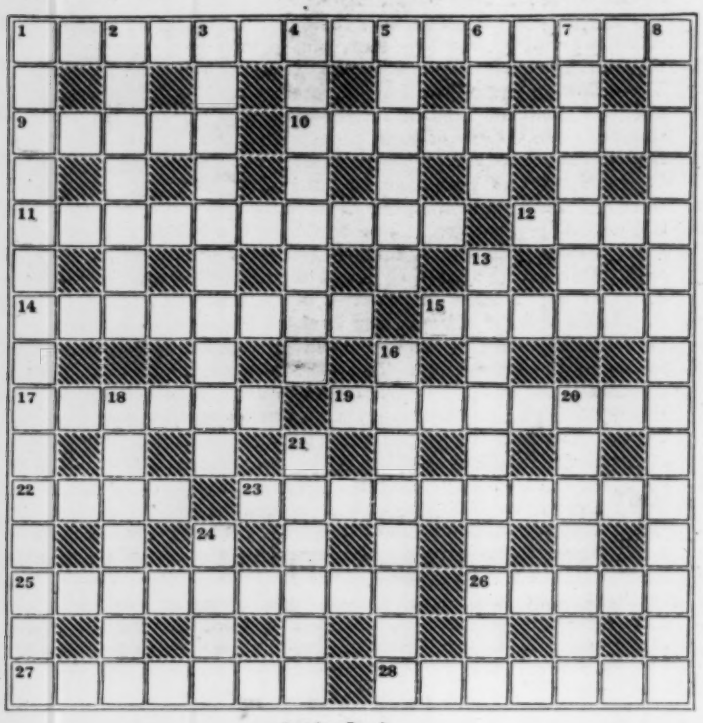
There is another feature of the financial situation which is not entirely satisfactory—namely, the very high relative level of the prices of British industrial ordinary shares. These prices presume not merely a maintenance of the present industrial activity for an indefinite period to come but a substantial further improvement. Not that many people actually believe this, but each is hopeful of unloading on the other fellow in good time. It is true that prices not much below the present level might be justified if the long-term rate of interest were to fall sufficiently to bring forward new types of capital development. But the present *relative* levels of gilt-edged securities and of industrial ordinary shares are calculated, unless they are revised, to bring ultimate disappointment to the holders of the latter.

To argue that, on a long view, first-class fixed interest securities are cheaper to-day than the general run of British industrial ordinaries is not in accordance with the popular mood. The prospect of large Government expenditure on armaments is thought to lead to precisely the opposite conclusion. The view that I am indicating may, indeed, be premature. But if it is not true now, it soon may be.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 311

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Mrs. O. Lancaster, 131 Oakwood Court, W.14.

ACROSS.

1. Shirley you've heard of her.
9. He was wheeled around.
10. Fit remark for a commonplace book.
11. Hills one descends on crossing mountains from the north.
12. Unless it is in reverse.
14. It's a silly bird if it thinks to second the first.
15. This sort of band would easily get tied up in knots.
17. Touchstone's "ill-favoured thing, Sir, but mine own."
19. The story would not have been so short if the craft of the three men of Gotham had been this.
22. Put your clothes on the wrong way.
23. Not breathing, but eating space.
25. Suggests the cry of an Oriental chick in London.
26. In order to excel one must perform in the open air.
27. It does not have to be uprooted from coastal gardens.
28. Needs me to give proprietary possession.

DOWN.

1. Coloured hikers?
2. Factor to make one to quail.
3. Brachycephalic people could never be so intelligent.
4. Highest cut-out.
5. "She loosed the chain, and down she lay; The broad stream bore her far away."
6. Has an unpleasant habit of staring people in the face.
7. Paper ones for Argonauts.
8. Appropriate floral decoration at a Conservative dinner.
13. A safe sort of chamber.
16. In undress fashion.
18. You would not get a lively passage over this water.
20. Morbid developments.
21. Cranky part of the engine.
24. Take care of it.

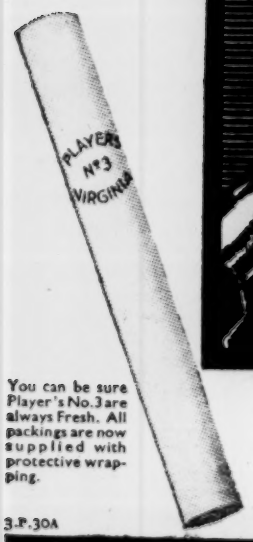
LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

■	L	I	G	H	T	I	N	G	U	P	T	I	M	E
K	■	N	■	A	■	L	■	U	■	R	■	N	■	L
N	O	S	T	R	I	L	■	T	R	E	S	T	L	E
I	■	P	■	E	■	Y	■	T	■	S	■	R	■	C
T	R	E	E	■	G	R	E	A	T	S	P	O	R	T
T	■	C	■	W	■	I	■	T	■	S	■	I	■	R
I	N	T	R	I	C	A	T	E	■	T	U	T	T	I
N	■	■	■	N	■	■	■	■	U	■	■	■	■	C
G	E	L	I	D	■	S	P	E	E	D	W	E	L	L
N	■	E	■	J	■	T	■	L	■	S	■	N	■	I
E	X	T	R	A	N	E	O	U	S	■	A	G	A	G
E	■	S	■	M	■	R	■	S	■	A	■	R	■	H
D	O	L	L	M	A	N	■	I	N	G	R	A	F	T
L	■	I	■	E	■	U	■	O	■	R	■	I	■	S
E	X	P	E	R	I	M	E	N	T	A	L	L	Y	■

FAMOUS FIGURES

Jean Nicot, French Ambassador to Portugal, is traditionally associated with the introduction of Tobacco into France. He sent Tobacco to the French Court in 1560. "Nicotiana," the botanical name of Tobacco, commemorates Nicot.

Player's No. 3 is another figure easily remembered because of its merits, representing, as it does, a Cigarette of delightful mellowness and flavour, giving always that little extra quality so necessary for complete enjoyment by the critical smoker.



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32 SUBJECTS:

H. G. Wells	Lord Beaverbrook	Prof. Einstein
Ramsay MacDonald	Philip Snowden	J. M. Keynes
Arnold Bennett	Winston Churchill	Mister Baldwin
Lord Oxford	Hilaire Belloc	Sir John Reith
Joseph Conrad	J. L. Garvin	Walter Elliot
Sir W. Joynson-Hicks	G. K. Chesterton	Aldous Huxley
Bernard Shaw	The Lord Chief Justice	James Maxton
Lloyd George	Augustus John	Dr. Marie Stopes
St. Loe Strachey	J. H. Thomas	Sir John Simon
Sir Austen Chamberlain	Robert Lynd	P. G. Wodehouse
Ernest Bevin	Somerset Maugham	

Opportunities in KENYA

Men with moderate capital, or with an income which restricts their activities in England, find that settlement in Kenya opens up a fuller life. Without sacrificing social amenities, one can live in Kenya on a sum which would be inadequate at home. Fertile land; equable climate; labour and other costs are low. If you are interested in settlement or in farming write to Col. Knaggs, who will be pleased to send you illustrated literature and to answer your questions personally. — Col. Knaggs, Kenya Government Agent, Dept. 4, Grand Buildings, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2.

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A list of important publications for the Spring, including forthcoming books by Charles Morgan, Virginia Woolf, Aldous Huxley and Bernard Shaw.

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APPOINTMENTS VACANT & WANTED

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

Applications invited for position of PRINCIPAL of Central School of Arts and Crafts, Southampton Row, W.C.1. School was established for training craftsmen and industrial artists in highest branches of their craft or profession. Instruction given in day and evening classes includes silversmiths' work and allied crafts, textiles and costume, painted and sculptured architectural decoration, stained glass and mosaic, furniture, book production, engraving and lithography. Also full-time day technical schools for boys (aged 13–16) in silversmiths' and jewellers' work and book production, and part-time day instruction for apprentices in the crafts. Salary £1,400 a year. In addition to high qualifications as practical artist, principal must possess organising and administrative ability. Must maintain close touch with industries for which the School training is a preparation, and with Industrial Art Museums and institutions by which the School may be benefited. So far as is consistent with School duties he will be expected to continue the practice of his art. Further details of aims of School and application form obtainable by forwarding stamped addressed foolscap envelope to EDUCATION OFFICER (T.1.), County Hall, S.E.1. Form and copies of three recent testimonials must be returned to Education Officer by 14th March. Canvassing disqualifies.

APPOINTMENTS—continued

LANCASHIRE COUNTY LIBRARY
Horwich Branch

An Assistant-in-Charge is required for the Horwich Branch of the Lancashire County Library; salary £150–10–£200. Candidates must have completed the course for the Diploma of the Library Association, or of the School of Librarianship. Applications, accompanied by copies of three testimonials, must reach the DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, County Offices, Preston, by the first post on February 29th.

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